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Jesus The Christ: A
Study Of The Messiah
And His Mission
According To Holy
Scriptures Both Ancient
And Modern V1



James E. Talmage

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Messiah And His Mission
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Ancient And Modern V1**

James E. Talmage

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By

JOSEPH F. SMITH

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PREFACE.

The scope of the subject presented in this work is expressed on the title page. It will be readily seen that the author has departed from the course usually followed by writers on the Life of Jesus Christ, which course, as a rule, begins with the birth of Mary's Babe and ends with the ascension of the slain and risen Lord from Olivet. The treatment embodied in these pages, in addition to the narrative of the Lord's life in the flesh comprises the antemortal existence and activities of the world's Redeemer, the revelations and personal manifestations of the glorified and exalted Son of God during the apostolic period of old and in modern times, the assured nearness of the Lord's second advent, and predicted events beyond—all so far as the Holy Scriptures make plain.

It is particularly congruous and appropriate that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—the only Church that affirms authority based on specific revelation and commission to use the Lord's Holy Name as a distinctive designation—should set forth her doctrines concerning the Messiah and His mission.

The author of this volume entered upon his welcome service under request and appointment from the presiding authorities of the Church; and the completed work has been read to and is approved by the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve. It presents, however, the writer's personal belief and profoundest conviction as to the truth of

what he has written. The book is published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

A characteristic feature of the work is the guidance afforded by modern scriptures and the explication of the Holy Writ of olden times in the light of present day revelation, which, as a powerful and well directed beam, illuminates many dark passages of ancient construction.

The spirit of the sacredness inherent in the subject has been a constant companion of the writer throughout his pleasing labor, and he reverently invokes the same as a minister to the readers of the volume.

JAMES E. TALMAGE.

Salt Lake City, Utah,
September, 1915.

PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

The second edition of this work appeared in December, 1915, and the third in March, 1916. The third edition presented several minor alterations in wording and contained additional notes and references. Succeeding issues, including the fifth which was printed on India paper, and the present edition are practically uniform with the third.

JAMES E. TALMAGE.

Salt Lake City, Utah,
October, 1922.

NOTE TO THE SEVENTH EDITION.

This, the Seventh Edition of Dr. James E. Talmage's excellent work, is issued during the author's absence in Europe. This imprint is taken from the plates used in the last preceding edition.

DESERET BOOK COMPANY.

April, 1925

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JESUS THE CHRIST

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION.

It is a matter of history that, at or near the beginning of what has since come to be known as the Christian era, the Man Jesus, surnamed the Christ, was born in Bethlehem of Judea.^a The principal data as to His birth, life, and death are so well attested as to be reasonably indisputable; they are facts of record, and are accepted as essentially authentic by the civilized world at large. True, there are diversities of deduction based on alleged discrepancies in the records of the past as to circumstantial details; but such differences are of strictly minor importance, for none of them nor all taken together cast a shadow of rational doubt upon the historicity of the earthly existence of the Man known in literature as Jesus of Nazareth.

As to who and what He was there are dissensions of grave moment dividing the opinions of men; and this divergence of conception and belief is most pronounced upon those matters to which the greatest importance attaches. The solemn testimonies of millions dead and of millions living unite in proclaiming Him as divine, the Son of the Living God, the Redeemer and Savior of the human race, the Eternal Judge of the souls of men, the Chosen and Anointed

^a As to the year of Christ's birth, see chapter 8.

of the Father—in short, the Christ. Others there are who deny His Godhood while extolling the transcendent qualities of His unparalleled and unapproachable Manhood.

To the student of history this Man among men stands first, foremost, and alone, as a directing personality in the world's progression. Mankind has never produced a leader to rank with Him. Regarded solely as a historic personage He is unique. Judged by the standard of human estimation, Jesus of Nazareth is supreme among men by reason of the excellence of His personal character, the simplicity, beauty, and genuine worth of His precepts, and the influence of His example and doctrines in the advancement of the race. To these distinguishing characteristics of surpassing greatness the devout Christian soul adds an attribute that far exceeds the sum of all the others—the divinity of Christ's origin and the eternal reality of His status as Lord and God.

Christian and unbeliever alike acknowledge His supremacy as a Man, and respect the epoch-making significance of His birth. Christ was born in the meridian of time;^b and His life on earth marked at once the culmination of the past and the inauguration of an era distinctive in human hope, endeavor, and achievement. His advent determined a new order in the reckoning of the years; and by common consent the centuries antedating His birth have been counted backward from the pivotal event and are designated accordingly. The rise and fall of dynasties, the birth and dissolution of nations, all the cycles of history as to war and peace, as to prosperity and adversity, as to health and pestilence, seasons of plenty and of famine, the awful happenings of earthquake and storm, the triumphs of invention and discovery, the epochs of man's development in godliness and the long periods of his dwindling in unbelief—all the occurrences that make history—are chronicled throughout Christendom by reference to the year before or after the birth of Jesus Christ.

^b See chapter 6.

His earthly life covered a period of thirty-three years; and of these but three were spent by Him as an acknowledged Teacher openly engaged in the activities of public ministry. He was brought to a violent death before He had attained what we now regard as the age of manhood's prime. As an individual He was personally known to but few; and His fame as a world character became general only after His death.

Brief account of some of His words and works has been preserved to us; and this record, fragmentary and incomplete though it be, is rightly esteemed as the world's greatest treasure. The earliest and most extended history of His mortal existence is embodied within the compilation of scriptures known as the New Testament; indeed but little is said of Him by secular historians of His time. Few and short as are the allusions to Him made by non-scriptural writers in the period immediately following that of His ministry, enough is found to corroborate the sacred record as to the actuality and period of Christ's earthly existence.

No adequate biography of Jesus as Boy and Man has been or can be written, for the sufficing reason that a fulness of data is lacking. Nevertheless, man never lived of whom more has been said and sung, none to whom is devoted a greater proportion of the world's literature. He is extolled by Christian, Mohammedan and Jew, by skeptic and infidel, by the world's greatest poets, philosophers, statesmen, scientists, and historians. Even the profane sinner in the foul sacrilege of his oath acclaims the divine supremacy of Him whose name he desecrates.

The purpose of the present treatise is that of considering the life and mission of Jesus as the Christ. In this undertaking we are to be guided by the light of both ancient and modern scriptures; and, thus led, we shall discover, even in the early stages of our course, that the word of God as revealed in latter days is effective in illumining and making plain

the Holy Writ of ancient times, and this, in many matters of the profoundest import.^c

Instead of beginning our study with the earthly birth of the Holy Babe of Bethlehem, we shall consider the part taken by the Firstborn Son of God in the primeval councils of heaven, at the time when He was chosen and ordained to be the Savior of the unborn race of mortals, the Redeemer of a world then in its formative stages of development. We are to study Him as the Creator of the world, as the Word of Power, through whom the purposes of the Eternal Father were realized in the preparation of the earth for the abode of His myriad spirit-children during the appointed period of their mortal probation. Jesus Christ was and is Jehovah, the God of Adam and of Noah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, the God at whose instance the prophets of the ages have spoken, the God of all nations, and He who shall yet reign on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords.

His wondrous yet natural birth, His immaculate life in the flesh, and His voluntary death as a consecrated sacrifice for the sins of mankind, shall claim our reverent attention; as shall also His redeeming service in the world of disembodied spirits; His literal resurrection from bodily death to immortality; His several appearings to men and His continued ministry as the Resurrected Lord on both continents; the reestablishment of His Church through His personal presence and that of the Eternal Father in the latter days; and His coming to His temple in the current dispensation. All these developments in the ministration of the Christ are already of the past. Our proposed course of investigation will lead yet onward, into the future concerning which the word of divine revelation is of record. We shall consider

^c The Holy Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price constitute the standard works of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These will be cited alike as Scriptures in the following pages, for such they are.

the conditions incident to the Lord's return in power and glory to inaugurate the dominion of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and to usher in the predicted Millennium of peace and righteousness. And yet beyond we shall follow Him, through the post-Millennial conflict between the powers of heaven and the forces of hell, to the completion of His victory over Satan, sin, and death, when He shall present the glorified earth and its sanctified hosts, spotless and celestialized, unto the Father.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints affirms her possession of divine authority for the use of the sacred name, Jesus Christ, as the essential part of her distinctive designation. In view of this exalted claim, it is pertinent to inquire as to what special or particular message the Church has to give to the world concerning the Redeemer and Savior of the race, and as to what she has to say in justification of her solemn affirmation, or in vindication of her exclusive name and title. As we proceed with our study, we shall find that among the specific teachings of the Church respecting the Christ are these:

(1) The unity and continuity of His mission in all ages —this of necessity involving the verity of His preexistence and foreordination. (2) The fact of His antemortal Godship. (3) The actuality of His birth in the flesh as the natural issue of divine and mortal parentage. (4) The reality of His death and physical resurrection, as a result of which the power of death shall be eventually overcome. (5) The literalness of the atonement wrought by Him, including the absolute requirement of individual compliance with the laws and ordinances of His gospel as the means by which salvation may be attained. (6) The restoration of His Priesthood and the reestablishment of His Church in the current age, which is verily the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. (7) The certainty of His return to earth in the near future, with power and great glory, to reign in Person and bodily presence as Lord and King.

CHAPTER 2.

PREEXISTENCE AND FOREORDINATION OF THE CHRIST.

We affirm, on the authority of Holy Scripture, that the Being who is known among men as Jesus of Nazareth, and by all who acknowledge His Godhood as Jesus the Christ, existed with the Father prior to birth in the flesh; and that in the preexistent state He was chosen and ordained to be the one and only Savior and Redeemer of the human race. Foreordination implies and comprises preexistence as an essential condition; therefore scriptures bearing upon the one are germane to the other; and consequently in this presentation no segregation of evidence as applying specifically to the preexistence of Christ or to His foreordination will be attempted.

John the Revelator beheld in vision some of the scenes that had been enacted in the spirit-world before the beginning of human history. He witnessed strife and contention between loyalty and rebellion, with the hosts defending the former led by Michael the archangel, and the rebellious forces captained by Satan, who is also called the devil, the serpent, and the dragon. We read: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels."^a

In this struggle between unembodied hosts the forces were unequally divided; Satan drew to his standard only a third part of the children of God, who are symbolized as the "stars of heaven";^b the majority either fought with Michael, or at least refrained from active opposition,

^a Rev. 12:7; see also verses 8 and 9.

^b Rev. 12:4; see also Doc. and Cov. 29:36-38; and 76:25-27.

thus accomplishing the purpose of their "first estate"; while the angels who arrayed themselves on the side of Satan "kept not their first estate",^c and therefore rendered themselves ineligible for the glorious possibilities of an advanced condition or "second estate".^d The victory was with Michael and his angels; and Satan or Lucifer, theretofore a "son of the morning", was cast out of heaven, yea "he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him".^e The prophet Isaiah, to whom these momentous occurrences had been revealed about eight centuries prior to the time of John's writings, laments with inspired pathos the fall of so great a one; and specifies selfish ambition as the occasion: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."^f

Justification for citing these scriptures in connection with our present consideration will be found in the cause of the great contention—the conditions that led to this war in heaven. It is plain from the words of Isaiah that Lucifer, already of exalted rank, sought to aggrandize himself without regard to the rights and agency of others. The matter is set forth, in words that none may misapprehend, in a revelation given to Moses and repeated through the first prophet of the present dispensation: "And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, say-

^c Jude 6.

^d P. of G. P., Abraham 3:26.

^e Rev. 12:9.

^f Isa. 14:12-15; compare Doc. and Cov. 29:36-38; and 76:23-27.

ing—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor. But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down; and he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.”^g

Thus it is shown that prior to the placing of man upon the earth, how long before we do not know, Christ and Satan, together with the hosts of the spirit-children of God, existed as intelligent individuals,^h possessing power and opportunity to choose the course they would pursue and the leaders whom they would follow and obey.ⁱ In that great concourse of spirit-intelligences, the Father’s plan, whereby His children would be advanced to their second estate, was submitted and doubtless discussed. The opportunity so placed within the reach of the spirits who were to be privileged to take bodies upon the earth was so transcendently glorious that those heavenly multitudes burst forth into song and shouted for joy.^j

Satan’s plan of compulsion, whereby all would be safely conducted through the career of mortality, bereft of freedom to act and agency to choose, so circumscribed that they would be compelled to do right—that one soul would not be lost—was rejected; and the humble offer of Jesus the First-born—to assume mortality and live among men as their Ex-

^g P. of G. P., Moses 4:1-4; see also Abraham 3:27, 28.

^h For a further treatment of the preexistence of spirits see the author’s “Articles of Faith” x:21-30.

ⁱ Note 1, end of chapter.

^j Job 38:7.

emplar and Teacher, observing the sanctity of man's agency but teaching men to use aright that divine heritage—was accepted. The decision brought war, which resulted in the vanquishment of Satan and his angels, who were cast out and deprived of the boundless privileges incident to the mortal or second estate.

In that august council of the angels and the Gods, the Being who later was born in flesh as Mary's Son, Jesus, took prominent part, and there was He ordained of the Father to be the Savior of mankind. As to time, the term being used in the sense of all duration past, this is our earliest record of the Firstborn among the sons of God; to us who read, it marks the beginning of the written history of Jesus the Christ.^k

Old Testament scriptures, while abounding in promises relating to the actuality of Christ's advent in the flesh, are less specific in information concerning His antemortal existence. By the children of Israel, while living under the law and still unprepared to receive the gospel, the Messiah was looked for as one to be born in the lineage of Abraham and David, empowered to deliver them from personal and national burdens, and to vanquish their enemies. The actuality of the Messiah's status as the chosen Son of God, who was with the Father from the beginning, a Being of preexistent power and glory, was but dimly perceived, if conceived at all, by the people in general; and although to prophets specially commissioned in the authorities and privileges of the Holy Priesthood, revelation of the great truth was given,^l they transmitted it to the people rather in the language of imagery and parable than in words of direct plainness. Nevertheless the testimony of the evangelists and the apostles, the attestation of the Christ Himself while in the flesh, and the revelations given in the present dispensation leave us without dearth of scriptural proof.

^k Note 2, end of chapter.

^l Psalm 25:14; Amos 3:7.

In the opening lines of the Gospel book written by John the apostle, we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."^m

The passage is simple, precise and unambiguous. We may reasonably give to the phrase "In the beginning" the same meaning as attaches thereto in the first line of Genesis; and such signification must indicate a time antecedent to the earliest stages of human existence upon the earth. That the Word is Jesus Christ, who was with the Father in that beginning and who was Himself invested with the powers and rank of Godship, and that He came into the world and dwelt among men, are definitely affirmed. These statements are corroborated through a revelation given to Moses, in which he was permitted to see many of the creations of God, and to hear the voice of the Father with respect to the things that had been made: "And by the word of my power, have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth."ⁿ

John the apostle repeatedly affirms the preexistence of the Christ and the fact of His authority and power in the antemortal state.^o To the same effect is the testimony of Paul^p and of Peter. Instructing the saints concerning the basis of their faith, the last-named apostle impressed upon them that their redemption was not to be secured through corruptible things nor by the outward observance of traditional requirements, "But with the precious blood of Christ,

^m John 1:1-3, 14; see also 1 John 1:1; 5:7; Rev. 19:13; compare Doc. and Cov. 93:1-17, 21.

ⁿ P. of G. P., Moses 1:32, 33; see also 2:5.

^o 1 John 1:1-3; 2:13, 14; 4:9; Rev. 3:14.

^p 2 Tim. 1:9, 10; Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:4; 3:9, 11; Titus 1:2. See especially Rom. 3:25; and note the marginal rendering—"foreordained"—making the passage read: "Whom God hath foreordained to be a propitiation."

as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”^q

Even more impressive and yet more truly conclusive are the personal testimonies of the Savior as to His own pre-existent life and the mission among men to which He had been appointed. No one who accepts Jesus as the Messiah can consistently reject these evidences of His eternal nature. When, on a certain occasion, the Jews in the synagog disputed among themselves and murmured because of their failure to understand aright His doctrine concerning Himself, especially as touching His relationship with the Father, Jesus said unto them: “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” And then, continuing the lesson based upon the contrast between the manna with which their fathers had been fed in the wilderness and the bread of life which He had to offer, He added: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven,” and again declared “the living Father hath sent me.” Not a few of the disciples failed to comprehend His teachings; and their complaints drew from Him these words: “Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?”^r

To certain wicked Jews, wrapped in the mantle of racial pride, boastful of their descent through the lineage of Abraham, and seeking to excuse their sins through an unwarranted use of the great patriarch’s name, our Lord thus proclaimed His own preeminence: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”^s The fuller significance of this remark will be treated later; suffice it in the present connection to consider this scripture as a plain avowal of our Lord’s seniority and supremacy over Abraham. But as Abraham’s birth had preceded that of Christ by more than

^q 1 Peter 1:19, 20.

^r John 6:38, 51, 57, 61, 62.

^s John 8:58; see also 17:5, 24; and compare Exo. 3:14. Page 37.

nineteen centuries, such seniority must have reference to a state of existence antedating that of mortality.

When the hour of His betrayal was near, in the last interview with the apostles prior to His agonizing experience in Gethsemane, Jesus comforted them saying: "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."^t Furthermore, in the course of up-welling prayer for those who had been true to their testimony of His Messiahship, He addressed the Father with this solemn invocation: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."^u

Book of Mormon scriptures are likewise explicit in proof of the preexistence of the Christ and of His foreappointed mission. One only of the many evidences therein found will be cited here. An ancient prophet, designated in the record as the brother of Jared,^v once pleaded with the Lord in special supplication: "And the Lord said unto him, Believest thou the words which I shall speak? And he answered, Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie. And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord shewed himself unto him, and said, Because thou knowest these things, ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I shew myself unto you. Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the

^t John 16:27, 28; see also 13:3.

^u John 17:3-5; see also verses 24, 25.

^v Note 3, end of chapter.

Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have light, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters. And never have I shewed myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning, after mine own image. Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit, will I appear unto my people in the flesh."^w The main facts attested by this scripture as having a direct bearing upon our present subject are those of the Christ manifesting Himself while yet in His antemortal state, and of His declaration that He had been chosen from the foundation of the world as the Redeemer.

Revelation given through the prophets of God in the present dispensation is replete with evidence of Christ's appointment and ordination in the primeval world; and the whole tenor of the scriptures contained in the Doctrine and Covenants may be called in witness. The following instances are particularly in point. In a communication to Joseph Smith the prophet, in May, 1833, the Lord declared Himself as the One who had previously come into the world from the Father, and of whom John had borne testimony as the Word; and the solemn truth is reiterated that He, Jesus Christ, "was in the beginning, before the world was", and further, that He was the Redeemer who "came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men." Again, He is referred to as "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh." In the course of the same revelation the Lord said: "And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with

^w B. of M., Ether 3:11-16. See also 1 Nephi 17:30; 19:7; 2 Nephi 9:5; 11:7; 25:12; 26:12; Mosiah 3:5; 4:2; 7:27; 13:34; 15:1; Alma 11:40; Hela. 14:12; 3 Nephi 9:15.

the Father and am the firstborn.”^x On an earlier occasion, as the modern prophet testifies, he and an associate in the priesthood were enlightened by the Spirit so that they were able to see and understand the things of God—“Even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father, through his Only Begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning, of whom we bear record, and the record which we bear is the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision.”^y

The testimony of scriptures written on both hemispheres, that of records both ancient and modern, the inspired utterances of prophets and apostles, and the words of the Lord Himself, are of one voice in proclaiming the preexistence of the Christ and His ordination as the chosen Savior and Redeemer of mankind—in the beginning, yea, even before the foundation of the world.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2.

1. Graded Intelligences in the Antemortal State.—That the spirits of men existed as individual intelligences, of varying degrees of ability and power, prior to the inauguration of the mortal state upon this earth and even prior to the creation of the world as a suitable abode for human beings, is shown in great plainness through a divine revelation to Abraham: “Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; and God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.” (P. of G. P., Abraham 3:22, 23.)

That both Christ and Satan were among those exalted intelligences, and that Christ was chosen while Satan was rejected as the future Savior of mankind, are shown by the portions of the revelation immediately following that above quoted: “And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an

^x Doc. and Cov. 93:1-17, 21.

^y Doc. and Cov. 76:13, 14.

earth whereon these may dwell; and we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; and they who keep their first estate shall be added upon, and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads forever and ever. And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first. And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him" (verses 24-28).

2. The Primeval Council in the Heavens.—"It is definitely stated in the Book of Genesis that God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;' and again, after Adam had taken of the forbidden fruit the Lord said, 'Behold, the man has become as one of us;' and the inference is direct that in all that related to the work of the creation of the world there was a consultation; and though God spake as it is recorded in the Bible, yet it is evident He counseled with others. The scriptures tell us there are 'Gods many and Lords many. But to us there is but one God, the Father' (1 Cor. 8:5). And for this reason, though there were others engaged in the creation of the worlds, it is given to us in the Bible in the shape that it is; for the fulness of these truths is only revealed to highly favored persons for certain reasons known to God; as we are told in the scriptures: 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.'—Psalms 25:14.

"It is consistent to believe that at this Council in the heavens the plan that should be adopted in relation to the sons of God who were then spirits, and had not yet obtained tabernacles, was duly considered. For, in view of the creation of the world and the placing of men upon it, whereby it would be possible for them to obtain tabernacles, and in those tabernacles obey laws of life, and with them again be exalted among the Gods, we are told that at that time, 'the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.' The question then arose, how, and upon what principle, should the salvation, exaltation and eternal glory of God's sons be brought about? It is evident that at that Council certain plans had been proposed and discussed, and that after a full discussion of those principles, and the declaration of the Father's will pertaining to His design, Lucifer came before the Father with a plan of his own, saying, 'Behold [here am] I; send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore, give me thine honor.' But Jesus, on hearing this statement made by Lucifer, said, 'Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.' From these remarks made by the well beloved Son, we should naturally infer that in the discussion of this subject the Father had made known His will and developed His plan and design pertaining to these matters, and all that His well beloved Son wanted to do was to carry out the will of His Father, as it would appear had been before expressed. He also wished the

glory to be given to His Father, who, as God the Father, and the originator and designer of the plan, had a right to all the honor and glory. But Lucifer wanted to introduce a plan contrary to the will of his Father, and then wanted His honor, and said: 'I will save every soul of man, wherefore give me thine honor.' He wanted to go contrary to the will of his Father, and presumptuously sought to deprive man of his free agency, thus making him a serf, and placing him in a position in which it was impossible for him to obtain that exaltation which God designed should be man's, through obedience to the law which He had suggested; and again, Lucifer wanted the honor and power of his Father, to enable him to carry out principles which were contrary to the Father's wish."—John Taylor—*Mediation and Atonement*, pp. 93, 94.

3. The Jaredites.—"Of the two nations whose histories constitute the Book of Mormon, the first in order of time consisted of the people of Jared, who followed their leader from the Tower of Babel at the time of the confusion of tongues. Their history was written on twenty-four plates of gold by Ether, the last of their prophets, who, foreseeing the destruction of his people because of their wickedness, hid away the historical plates. They were afterward found, B. C. 123, by an expedition sent out by King Limhi, a Nephite ruler. The record engraved on these plates was subsequently abridged by Moroni, and the condensed account was attached by him to the Book of Mormon record; it appears in the modern translation under the name of the Book of Ether.

"The first and chief prophet of the Jaredites is not mentioned by name in the record as we have it; he is known only as the brother of Jared. Of the people, we learn that, amid the confusion of Babel, Jared and his brother importuned the Lord that He would spare them and their associates from the impending disruption. Their prayer was heard, and the Lord led them with a considerable company, who, like themselves, were free from the taint of idolatry, away from their homes, promising to conduct them to a land choice above all other lands. Their course of travel is not given with exactness; we learn only that they reached the ocean, and there constructed eight vessels, called barges, in which they set out upon the waters. These vessels were small and dark within; but the Lord made luminous certain stones, which gave light to the imprisoned voyagers. After a passage of three hundred and forty-four days, the colony landed on the western shore of North America, probably at a place south of the Gulf of California, and north of the Isthmus of Panama.

"Here they became a flourishing nation; but, giving way in time to internal dissensions, they divided into factions, which warred with one another until the people were totally destroyed. This destruction, which occurred near the hill Ramah, afterward known among the Nephites as Cumorah, probably took place at about the time of Lehi's landing in South America—590 B. C."—The author, *Articles of Faith*, xiv:10-12.

CHAPTER 3.

THE NEED OF A REDEEMER.

We have heretofore shown that the entire human race existed as spirit-beings in the primeval world, and that for the purpose of making possible to them the experiences of mortality this earth was created. They were endowed with the powers of agency or choice while yet but spirits; and the divine plan provided that they be free-born in the flesh, heirs to the inalienable birthright of liberty to choose and to act for themselves in mortality. It is undeniably essential to the eternal progression of God's children that they be subjected to the influences of both good and evil, that they be tried and tested and proved withal, "to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them."^a Free agency is an indispensable element of such a test.

The Eternal Father well understood the diverse natures and varied capacities of His spirit-offspring; and His infinite foreknowledge made plain to Him, even in the beginning, that in the school of life some of His children would succeed and others would fail; some would be faithful, others false; some would choose the good, others the evil; some would seek the way of life while others would elect to follow the road to destruction. He further foresaw that death would enter the world, and that the possession of bodies by His children would be of but brief individual duration. He saw that His commandments would be disobeyed and His law violated; and that men, shut out from His presence and left to themselves, would sink rather than rise, would retrograde rather than advance, and would be lost to the heavens. It

^a P. of G. P., Abraham 3:25. For a fuller treatment of man's Free Agency, see the author's "Articles of Faith," iii:1-10, and the numerous references there given.

was necessary that a means of redemption be provided, whereby erring man might make amends, and by compliance with established law achieve salvation and eventual exaltation in the eternal worlds. The power of death was to be overcome, so that, though men would of necessity die, they would live anew, their spirits clothed with immortalized bodies over which death could not again prevail.

Let not ignorance and thoughtlessness lead us into the error of assuming that the Father's foreknowledge as to what *would be*, under given conditions, determined that such *must be*. It was not His design that the souls of mankind be lost; on the contrary it was and is His work and glory, "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."^b Nevertheless He saw the evil into which His children would assuredly fall; and with infinite love and mercy did He ordain means of averting the dire effect, provided the transgressor would elect to avail himself thereof.^c The offer of the firstborn Son to establish through His own ministry among men the gospel of salvation, and to sacrifice Himself, through labor, humiliation and suffering even unto death, was accepted and made the foreordained plan of man's redemption from death, of his eventual salvation from the effects of sin, and of his possible exaltation through righteous achievement.

In accordance with the plan adopted in the council of the Gods, man was created as an embodied spirit; his tabernacle of flesh was composed of the elements of earth.^d He was given commandment and law, and was free to obey or disobey—with the just and inevitable condition that he should enjoy or suffer the natural results of his choice.^e Adam, the first man^f placed upon the earth in pursuance of the

^b P. of G. P., Moses 1:39; compare 6:59. Note 1, end of chapter.

^c Note 2, end of chapter.

^d Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:7; compare P. of G. P., Moses 2:26, 27; 3:7; Abraham 4:26-28; 5:7.

^e Gen. 1:28-31; 2:16, 17; compare P. of G. P., Moses 2:28-31; 3:16, 17; Abraham 4:28-31; 5:12, 13.

^f Gen. 2:8; compare statement in verse 5—that prior to that time there was "not a man to till the ground"; see also P. of G. P., Moses 3:7; Abraham 1:3; and B. of M., 1 Nephi 5:11.

established plan, and Eve who was given unto him as companion and associate, indispensable to him in the appointed mission of peopling the earth, disobeyed the express commandment of God and so brought about the "fall of man", whereby the mortal state, of which death is an essential element, was inaugurated.^g It is not proposed to consider here at length the doctrine of the fall; for the present argument it is sufficient to establish the fact of the momentous occurrence and its portentous consequences.^h The woman was deceived, and in direct violation of counsel and commandment partook of the food that had been forbidden, as a result of which act her body became degenerate and subject to death. Adam realized the disparity that had been brought between him and his companion, and with some measure of understanding followed her course, thus becoming her partner in bodily degeneracy. Note in this matter the words of Paul the apostle: "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."ⁱ

The man and the woman had now become mortal; through indulgence in food unsuited to their nature and condition and against which they had been specifically warned, and as the inevitable result of their disobeying the divine law and commandment, they became liable to the physical ailments and bodily frailties to which mankind has since been the natural heir.^j Those bodies, which before the fall had been perfect in form and function, were now subjects for eventual dissolution or death. The arch-tempter through whose sophistries, half-truths and infamous falsehoods, Eve had been beguiled, was none other than Satan, or Lucifer, that rebellious and fallen "son of the morning", whose proposal involving the destruction of man's liberty had been rejected in the council of the heavens, and who had been "cast out into the earth", he and all his angels as un-

^g Gen. chap. 3; compare P. of G. P., Moses chap. 4.

^h See "Articles of Faith," iii:31-32.

ⁱ 1 Tim. 2:14; see also 2 Cor. 11:3.

^j Note 3, end of chapter.

embodied spirits, never to be tabernacled in bodies of their own.^k As an act of diabolic reprisal following his rejection in the council, his defeat by Michael and the heavenly hosts, and his ignominious expulsion from heaven, Satan planned to destroy the bodies in which the faithful spirits—those who had kept their first estate—would be born; and his beguilement of Eve was but an early stage of that infernal scheme.

Death has come to be the universal heritage; it may claim its victim in infancy or youth, in the period of life's prime, or its summons may be deferred until the snows of age have gathered upon the hoary head; it may befall as the result of accident or disease, by violence, or as we say, through natural causes; but come it must, as Satan well knows; and in this knowledge is his present though but temporary triumph. But the purposes of God, as they ever have been and ever shall be, are infinitely superior to the deepest designs of men or devils; and the Satanic machinations to make death inevitable, perpetual and supreme were provided against even before the first man had been created in the flesh. The atonement to be wrought by Jesus the Christ was ordained to overcome death and to provide a means of ransom from the power of Satan.

As the penalty incident to the fall came upon the race through an individual act, it would be manifestly unjust, and therefore impossible as part of the divine purpose, to make all men suffer the results thereof without provision for deliverance.^l Moreover, since by the transgression of one man sin came into the world and death was entailed upon all, it is consistent with reason that the atonement thus made necessary should be wrought by one.^m "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: . . . Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all

^k See page 7.

^l Note 4, end of chapter.

^m Note 5, end of chapter.

men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."ⁿ So taught the apostle Paul ; and, further : "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."^o

The atonement was plainly to be a vicarious sacrifice, voluntary and love-inspired on the Savior's part, universal in its application to mankind so far as men shall accept the means of deliverance thus placed within their reach. For such a mission only one who was without sin could be eligible. Even the altar victims of ancient Israel offered as a provisional propitiation for the offenses of the people under the Mosaic law had to be clean and devoid of spot or blemish ; otherwise they were unacceptable and the attempt to offer them was sacrilege.^p Jesus Christ was the only Being suited to the requirements of the great sacrifice :

- 1—As the one and only sinless Man ;
- 2—As the Only Begotten of the Father and therefore the only Being born to earth possessing in their fulness the attributes of both Godhood and manhood ;
- 3—As the One who had been chosen in the heavens and foreordained to this service.

What other man has been without sin, and therefore wholly exempt from the dominion of Satan, and to whom death, the wage of sin, is not naturally due ? Had Jesus Christ met death as other men have done—the result of the power that Satan has gained over them through their sins—His death would have been but an individual experience, expiatory in no degree of any faults or offenses but His own. Christ's absolute sinlessness made Him eligible, His humility and willingness rendered Him acceptable to the Father, as

ⁿ Rom. 5:12, 18.

^o 1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

^p Lev. 22:20; Deut. 15:21; 17:1; Mal. 1:8, 14; compare Heb. 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19.

the atoning sacrifice whereby propitiation could be made for the sins of all men.

What other man has lived with power to withstand death, over whom death could not prevail except through his own submission? Yet Jesus Christ could not be slain until His "hour had come", and that, the hour in which He voluntarily surrendered His life, and permitted His own decease through an act of will. Born of a mortal mother He inherited the capacity to die; begotten by an immortal Sire He possessed as a heritage the power to withstand death indefinitely. He literally gave up His life; to this effect is His own affirmation: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."^q And further: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."^r Only such a One could conquer death; in none but Jesus the Christ was realized this requisite condition of a Redeemer of the world.

What other man has come to earth with such appointment, clothed with the authority of such foreordination? The atoning mission of Jesus Christ was no self-assumption. True, He had offered Himself when the call was made in the heavens; true, He had been accepted, and in due time came to earth to carry into effect the terms of that acceptance; but He was chosen by One greater than Himself. The burden of His confession of authority was ever to the effect that He operated under the direction of the Father, as witness these words: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."^s "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."^t "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my

^q John 10:17-18.

^r John 5:26.

^s John 6:38.

^t John 4:34.

judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me.”^u

Through the atonement accomplished by Jesus Christ—a redeeming service, vicariously rendered in behalf of mankind, all of whom have become estranged from God by the effects of sin both inherited and individually incurred—the way is opened for a reconciliation whereby man may come again into communion with God, and be made fit to dwell anew and forever in the presence of his Eternal Father. This basal thought is admirably implied in our English word, “atonement,” which, as its syllables attest, is *at-one-ment*, “denoting reconciliation, or the bringing into agreement of those who have been estranged.”^v The effect of the atonement may be conveniently considered as twofold:

1—The universal redemption of the human race from death invoked by the fall of our first parents; and,

2—Salvation, whereby means of relief from the results of individual sin are provided.

The victory over death was made manifest in the resurrection of the crucified Christ; He was the first to pass from death to immortality and so is justly known as “the first fruits of them that slept.”^w That the resurrection of the dead so inaugurated is to be extended to every one who has or shall have lived is proved by an abundance of scriptural evidence. Following our Lord’s resurrection, others who had slept in the tomb arose and were seen of many, not as spirit-apparitions but as resurrected beings possessing immortalized bodies: “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”^x

Those who thus early came forth are spoken of as “the

^u John 5:30; see also verse 19; also Matt. 26:42; compare Doc. and Cov. 19:2; 20:24.

^v New Standard Dictionary under “propitiation.”

^w 1 Cor. 15:20; see also Acts 26:23; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5.

^x Matt. 27:52, 53.

saints"; and other scriptures confirm the fact that only the righteous shall be brought forth in the earlier stages of the resurrection yet to be consummated; but that all the dead shall in turn resume bodies of flesh and bones is placed beyond doubt by the revealed word. The Savior's direct affirmation ought to be conclusive: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. . . . Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."^y The doctrine of a universal resurrection was taught by the apostles of old,^z as also by the Nephite prophets;^a and the same is confirmed by revelation incident to the present dispensation.^b Even the heathen who have not known God shall be brought forth from their graves; and, inasmuch as they have lived and died in ignorance of the saving law, a means of making the plan of salvation known unto them is provided. "And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection."^c

Jacob, a Nephite prophet, taught the universality of the resurrection, and set forth the absolute need of a Redeemer, without whom the purposes of God in the creation of man would be rendered futile. His words constitute a concise and forceful summary of revealed truth directly bearing upon our present subject:

"For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator, there must needs be a

^y John 5:25, 28, 29. A modern scripture attesting the same truth reads: "They who have done good in the resurrection of the just; and they who have done evil in the resurrection of the unjust."—Doc. and Cov. 78:17.

^z For instances see Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:12, 13.

^a For instances see B. of M., 2 Nephi 9:6, 12, 13, 21, 22; Helaman 14:15-17; Mosiah 15:20-24; Alma 40:2-16; Mormon 9:13, 14.

^b For instances see Doc. and Cov. 18:11, 12; 45:44, 45; 88:95-98.

^c Doc. and Cov. 45:54.

power of resurrection, and the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall; and the fall came by reason of transgression; and because man became fallen, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord; wherefore it must needs be an infinite atonement; save it should be an infinite atonement, this corruption could not put on incorruption. Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man, must needs have remained to an endless duration. And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more. O the wisdom of God! his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more, our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more. And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself; yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents; who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder, and all manner of secret works of darkness. O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; yea, that monster, death and hell, which I call the death of the body, and also the death of the spirit. And because of the way of deliverance of our God, the Holy One of Israel, this death, of which I have spoken, which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave. And this death of which I have spoken, which is the spiritual death, shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel. O how great the plan of our God! For on the other hand, the paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh; save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect."^d

^d B. of M., 2 Nephi 9:6-13; read the entire chapter.

The application of the atonement to individual transgression, whereby the sinner may obtain absolution through compliance with the laws and ordinances embodied in the gospel of Jesus Christ, is conclusively attested by scripture. Since forgiveness of sins can be secured in none other way, there being either in heaven or earth no name save that of Jesus Christ whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men,^e every soul stands in need of the Savior's mediation, since all are sinners. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God", said Paul of old,^f and John the apostle added his testimony in these words: "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."^g

Who shall question the justice of God, which denies salvation to all who will not comply with the prescribed conditions on which alone it is declared obtainable? Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him",^h and God "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."ⁱ

Such then is the need of a Redeemer, for without Him mankind would forever remain in a fallen state, and as to hope of eternal progression would be inevitably lost.^j The mortal probation is provided as an opportunity for advancement; but so great are the difficulties and the dangers, so strong is the influence of evil in the world, and so weak is man in resistance thereto, that without the aid of a power above that of humanity no soul would find its way back to

^e P. of G. P., Moses 6:52; compare B. of M., 2 Nephi 25:20; Mosiah 3:17; 5:8; Doc. and Cov. 78:1.

^f Rom. 3:23; see also verse 9; Gal. 3:22.

^g 1 John 1:8.

^h Heb. 5:9.

ⁱ Rom. 2:8-9.

^j No special treatment relating to the Fall, the Atonement, or the Resurrection has been either attempted or intended in this chapter. For such the student is referred to doctrinal works dealing with these subjects. See the author's "Articles of Faith," lectures iii, iv, and xxi.

God from whom it came. The need of a Redeemer lies in the inability of man to raise himself from the temporal to the spiritual plane, from the lower kingdom to the higher. In this conception we are not without analogies in the natural world. We recognize a fundamental distinction between inanimate and living matter, between the inorganic and the organic, between the lifeless mineral on the one hand and the living plant or animal on the other. Within the limitations of its order the dead mineral grows by accretion of substance, and may attain a relatively perfect condition of structure and form as is seen in the crystal. But mineral matter, though acted upon favorably by the forces of nature—light, heat, electric energy and others—can never become a living organism; nor can the dead elements, through any process of chemical combination dissociated from life, enter into the tissues of the plant as essential parts thereof. But the plant, which is of a higher order, sends its rootlets into the earth, spreads its leaves in the atmosphere, and through these organs absorbs the solutions of the soil, inspires the gases of the air, and from such lifeless materials weaves the tissue of its wondrous structure. No mineral particle, no dead chemical substance has ever been made a constituent of organic tissue except through the agency of life. We may, perhaps with profit, carry the analogy a step farther. The plant is unable to advance its own tissue to the animal plane. Though it be the recognized order of nature that the “animal kingdom” is dependent upon the “vegetable kingdom” for its sustenance, the substance of the plant may become part of the animal organism only as the latter reaches down from its higher plane and by its own vital action incorporates the vegetable compounds with itself. In turn, animal matter can never become, even transitorily, part of a human body, except as the living man assimilates it, and by the vital processes of his own existence lifts, for the time being, the substance of the animal that supplied him

food to the higher plane of his own existence. The comparison herein employed is admittedly defective if carried beyond reasonable limits of application; for the raising of mineral matter to the plane of the plant, vegetable tissue to the level of the animal, and the elevation of either to the human plane, is but a temporary change; with the dissolution of the higher tissues the material thereof falls again to the level of the inanimate and the dead. But, as a means of illustration the analogy may not be wholly without value.

So, for the advancement of man from his present fallen and relatively degenerate state to the higher condition of spiritual life, a power above his own must cooperate. Through the operation of the laws obtaining in the higher kingdom man may be reached and lifted; himself he cannot save by his own unaided effort.^k A Redeemer and Savior of mankind is beyond all question essential to the realization of the plan of the Eternal Father, "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man";^l and that Redeemer and Savior is Jesus the Christ, beside whom there is and can be none other.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3.

1. God's Foreknowledge Not a Determining Cause.—"Respecting the foreknowledge of God, let it not be said that divine omniscience is of itself a determining cause whereby events are inevitably brought to pass. A mortal father, who knows the weaknesses and frailties of his son, may by reason of that knowledge sorrowfully predict the calamities and sufferings awaiting his wayward boy. He may foresee in that son's future a forfeiture of blessings that could have been won, loss of position, self-respect, reputation and honor; even the dark shadows of a felon's cell and the night of a drunkard's grave may appear in the sadening visions of that fond father's soul; yet, convinced by experience of the impossibility of bringing about that son's reform, he foresees the dread developments of the future, and he finds but sorrow and anguish in his knowledge. Can it be said that the father's foreknowledge is a cause of the son's sinful life?"

^k A comparison related to that given in the text is treated at length by Henry Drummond in his essay, "Biogenesis," which the reader may study with profit.

^l P. of G. P., Moses 1:39.

The son, perchance, has reached his maturity; he is the master of his own destiny; a free agent unto himself. The father is powerless to control by force or to direct by arbitrary command; and, while he would gladly make any effort or sacrifice to save his son from the fate impending, he fears for what seems to be an awful certainty. But surely that thoughtful, prayerful, loving parent does not, because of his knowledge, contribute to the son's waywardness. To reason otherwise would be to say that a neglectful father, who takes not the trouble to study the nature and character of his son, who shuts his eyes to sinful tendencies, and rests in careless indifference as to the probable future, will by his very heartlessness be benefitting his child, because his lack of forethought cannot operate as a contributory cause to dereliction.

"Our Heavenly Father has a full knowledge of the nature and disposition of each of His children, a knowledge gained by long observation and experience in the past eternity of our primeval childhood; a knowledge compared with which that gained by earthly parents through mortal experience with their children is infinitesimally small. By reason of that surpassing knowledge, God reads the future of child and children, of men individually and of men collectively as communities and nations; He knows what each will do under given conditions, and sees the end from the beginning. His foreknowledge is based on intelligence and reason. He foresees the future as a state which naturally and surely will be; not as one which must be because He has arbitrarily willed that it shall be."—From the author's *Great Apostasy*, pp. 19, 20.

2. Man Free to Choose for Himself.—"The Father of souls has endowed His children with the divine birthright of free agency; He does not and will not control them by arbitrary force; He impels no man toward sin; He compels none to righteousness. Unto man has been given freedom to act for himself; and, associated with this independence, is the fact of strict responsibility and the assurance of individual accountability. In the judgment with which we shall be judged, all the conditions and circumstances of our lives shall be considered. The inborn tendencies due to heredity, the effect of environment whether conducive to good or evil, the wholesome teachings of youth, or the absence of good instruction—these and all other contributory elements must be taken into account in the rendering of a just verdict as to the soul's guilt or innocence. Nevertheless, the divine wisdom makes plain what will be the result with given conditions operating on known natures and dispositions of men, while every individual is free to choose good or evil within the limits of the many conditions existing and operative."—*Great Apostasy*, p. 21; see also *Articles of Faith*, iii:1, 2.

3. The Fall a Process of Physical Degeneracy.—A modern revelation given to the Church in 1833 (Doc. and Cov. Sec. 89), prescribes rules for right living, particularly as regards the uses of stimulants, narcotics, and foods unsuited to the body. Concerning the physical causes by which the fall was brought about,

and the close relation between those causes and current violations of the Word of Wisdom embodied in the revelation referred to above, the following is in point. "This, [the Word of Wisdom] like other revelations that have come in the present dispensation, is not wholly new. It is as old as the human race. The principle of the Word of Wisdom was revealed unto Adam. All the essentials of the Word of Wisdom were made known unto him in his immortal state, before he had taken into his body those things that made of it a thing of earth. He was warned against that very practise. He was not told to treat his body as something to be tortured. He was not told to look upon it as the fakir of India has come to look upon his body, or professes to look upon it, as a thing to be utterly contemned; but he was told that he must not take into that body certain things which were there at hand. He was warned that, if he did, his body would lose the power which it then held of living for ever, and that he would become subject to death. It was pointed out to him, as it has been pointed out to you, that there are many good fruits to be plucked, to be eaten, to be enjoyed. We believe in enjoying good food. We think that these good things are given us of God. We believe in getting all the enjoyment out of eating that we can; and, therefore, we should avoid gluttony, and we should avoid extremes in all our habits of eating; and as was told unto Adam, so is it told unto us: Touch not these things; for in the day that thou doest it thy life shall be shortened and thou shalt die.

"Here let me say that therein consisted the fall—the eating of things unfit, the taking into the body of the things that made of that body a thing of earth: and I take this occasion to raise my voice against the false interpretation of scripture, which has been adopted by certain people, and is current in their minds, and is referred to in a hushed and half-secret way, that the fall of man consisted in some offense against the laws of chastity and of virtue. Such a doctrine is an abomination. What right have we to turn the scriptures from their proper sense and meaning? What right have we to declare that God meant not what He said? The fall was a natural process, resulting through the incorporation into the bodies of our first parents of the things that came from food unfit, through the violation of the command of God regarding what they should eat. Don't go around whispering that the fall consisted in the mother of the race losing her chastity and her virtue. It is not true; the human race is not born of fornication. These bodies that are given unto us are given in the way that God has provided. Let it not be said that the patriarch of the race, who stood with the gods before he came here upon the earth, and his equally royal consort, were guilty of any such foul offense. The adoption of that belief has led many to excuse departures from the path of chastity and the path of virtue, by saying that it is the sin of the race, that it is as old as Adam. It was not introduced by Adam. It was not committed by Eve. It was the introduction of the devil and came in order that he might sow the seeds of early death in the bodies of men and women, that the race should degenerate as it

has degenerated whenever the laws of virtue and of chastity have been transgressed.

"Our first parents were pure and noble, and when we pass behind the veil we shall perhaps learn something of their high estate, more than we know now. But be it known that they were pure; they were noble. It is true that they disobeyed the law of God, in eating things they were told not to eat; but who amongst you can rise up and condemn?"—From an address by the author at the Eighty-fourth Semiannual Conference of the Church, Oct. 6, 1913; published in the Proceedings of the Conference, pp. 118, 119.

4. Christ Wrought Redemption from the Fall.—"The Savior thus becomes master of the situation—the debt is paid, the redemption made, the covenant fulfilled, justice satisfied, the will of God done, and all power is now given into the hands of the Son of God—the power of the resurrection, the power of the redemption, the power of salvation, the power to enact laws for the carrying out and accomplishment of this design. Hence life and immortality are brought to light, the gospel is introduced, and He becomes the author of eternal life and exaltation. He is the Redeemer, the Resurrector, the Savior of man and the world; and He has appointed the law of the gospel as the medium which must be complied with in this world or the next, as He complied with His Father's law; hence 'he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' The plan, the arrangement, the agreement, the covenant was made, entered into and accepted before the foundation of the world; it was prefigured by sacrifices, and was carried out and consummated on the cross. Hence being the mediator between God and man, He becomes by right the dictator and director on earth and in heaven for the living and for the dead, for the past, the present and the future, pertaining to man as associated with this earth or the heavens, in time or eternity, the Captain of our salvation, the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession, the Lord and Giver of life."—John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, p. 171.

5. Redemption from the Effect of the Fall.—"Mormonism" accepts the doctrine of the fall, and the account of the transgression in Eden, as set forth in Genesis; but it affirms that none but Adam is or shall be answerable for Adam's disobedience; that mankind in general are absolutely absolved from responsibility for that 'original sin,' and that each shall account for his own transgressions alone; that the fall was foreknown of God, that it was turned to good effect by which the necessary condition of mortality should be inaugurated; and that a Redeemer was provided before the world was; that general salvation, in the sense of redemption from the effects of the fall, comes to all without their seeking it; but that individual salvation or rescue from the effects of personal sins is to be acquired by each for himself by faith and good works through the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ."—From the author's *Story and Philosophy of Mormonism*, D. III.

CHAPTER 4.

THE ANTEMORTAL GODSHIP OF CHRIST.

It now becomes our purpose to inquire as to the position and status of Jesus the Christ in the antemortal world, from the period of the solemn council in heaven, in which He was chosen to be the future Savior and Redeemer of mankind, to the time at which He was born in the flesh.

We claim scriptural authority for the assertion that Jesus Christ was and is God the Creator, the God who revealed Himself to Adam, Enoch, and all the antediluvial patriarchs and prophets down to Noah; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the God of Israel as a united people, and the God of Ephraim and Judah after the disruption of the Hebrew nation; the God who made Himself known to the prophets from Moses to Malachi; the God of the Old Testament record; and the God of the Nephites. We affirm that Jesus Christ was and is Jehovah, the Eternal One.

The scriptures specify three personages in the Godhead; (1) God the Eternal Father, (2) His Son Jesus Christ, and (3) the Holy Ghost. These constitute the Holy Trinity, comprising three physically separate and distinct individuals, who together constitute the presiding council of the heavens.^a At least two of these appear as directing participants in the work of creation; this fact is instanced by the plurality expressed in Genesis: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"; and later, in the course of consultation concerning Adam's act of transgression, "the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us."^b From the words of Moses, as revealed anew in the present dis-

^a See "God and the Godhead," in the author's "Articles of Faith," lecture ii.

^b Gen. 1:26; and 3:22.

pensation, we learn more fully of the Gods who were actively engaged in the creation of this earth: "And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Then, further, with regard to the condition of Adam after the fall: "I, the Lord God, said unto mine Only Begotten: Behold, the man is become as one of us."^c In the account of the creation recorded by Abraham, "the Gods" are repeatedly mentioned.^d

As heretofore shown in another connection, the Father operated in the work of creation through the Son, who thus became the executive through whom the will, commandment, or word of the Father was put into effect. It is with incisive appropriateness therefore, that the Son, Jesus Christ, is designated by the apostle John as the Word; or as declared by the Father "the word of my power".^e The part taken by Jesus Christ in the creation, a part so prominent as to justify our calling Him the Creator, is set forth in many scriptures. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers in this wise distinctively to the Father and the Son as separate though associated Beings: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."^f Paul is even more explicit in his letter to the Colossians, wherein, speaking of Jesus the Son, he says: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."^g And here let be repeated the testimony of John, that by the Word,

^c P. of G. P., Moses 2:26; and 4:28.

^d P. of G. P., Abraham, chaps. 4 and 5.

^e See page 10; John 1:1; and P. of G. P., Moses 1:32.

^f Heb. 1:1, 2; see also 1 Cor. 8:6.

^g Colos. 1:16, 17.

who was with God, and who was God even in the beginning, all things were made; "and without him was not anything made that was made."^h

That the Christ who was to come was in reality God the Creator was revealed in plainness to the prophets on the western hemisphere. Samuel, the converted Lamanite, in preaching to the unbelieving Nephites justified his testimony as follows: "And also that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things, from the beginning; and that ye might know of the signs of his coming, to the intent that ye might believe on his name."ⁱ

To these citations of ancient scripture may most properly be added the personal testimony of the Lord Jesus after He had become a resurrected Being. In His visitation to the Nephites He thus proclaimed Himself: "Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name."^j To the Nephites, who failed to comprehend the relation between the gospel declared unto them by the Resurrected Lord, and the Mosaic law which they held traditionally to be in force, and who marveled at His saying that old things had passed away, He explained in this wise: "Behold I say unto you, that the law is fulfilled that was given unto Moses. Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel: therefore, the law in me is fulfilled, for I have come to fulfil the law; therefore it hath an end."^k

Through revelation in the present or last dispensation the voice of Jesus Christ, the Creator of heaven and earth, has been heard anew: "Hearken, O ye people of my church

^h John 1:1-3.

ⁱ B. of M., Helaman 14:12; see also Mosiah 3:8; 4:2; Alma 11:39.

^j B. of M., 3 Nephi 9:15.

^k B. of M., 3 Nephi 15:4, 5.

to whom the kingdom has been given—hearken ye and give ear to him who laid the foundation of the earth, who made the heavens and all the hosts thereof, and by whom all things were made which live, and move, and have a being.”^l And again, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, who created the heavens and the earth; a light which cannot be hid in darkness.”^m

The divinity of Jesus Christ is indicated by the specific names and titles authoritatively applied to Him. According to man’s judgment there may be but little importance attached to names; but in the nomenclature of the Gods every name is a title of power or station. God is righteously zealous of the sanctity of His own nameⁿ and of names given by His appointment. In the case of children of promise names have been prescribed before birth; this is true of our Lord Jesus and of the Baptist, John, who was sent to prepare the way for the Christ. Names of persons have been changed by divine direction, when not sufficiently definite as titles denoting the particular service to which the bearers were called, or the special blessings conferred upon them.^o

Jesus is the individual name of the Savior, and as thus spelled is of Greek derivation; its Hebrew equivalent was *Yehoshua* or *Yeshua*, or, as we render it in English, *Joshua*. In the original the name was well understood as meaning “Help of Jehovah”, or “Savior”. Though as common an appellation as John or Henry or Charles today, the name was nevertheless divinely prescribed, as already stated. Thus, unto Joseph, the espoused husband of the Virgin, the angel said, “And thou shalt call his name **JESUS**: for he shall save his people from their sins.”^p

Christ is a sacred title, and not an ordinary appellation or common name; it is of Greek derivation, and in meaning

^l Doc. and Cov. 45:1.

^m Doc. and Cov. 14:9; see also 29:1, 31; 76:24.

ⁿ Exo. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Deut. 5:11.

^o Note 1, end of chapter.

^p Matt. 1:21; see also verses 23, 25; Luke 1:31.

is identical with its Hebrew equivalent *Messiah* or *Messias*, signifying the *Anointed One*.^q Other titles, each possessing a definitive meaning, such as *Emmanuel*, *Savior*, *Redeemer*, *Only Begotten Son*, *Lord*, *Son of God*, *Son of Man*, and many more, are of scriptural occurrence; the fact of main present importance to us is that these several titles are expressive of our Lord's divine origin and Godship. As seen, the essential names or titles of Jesus the Christ were made known before His birth, and were revealed to prophets who preceded Him in the mortal state.^r

Jehovah is the Anglicized rendering of the Hebrew, *Yahveh* or *Jahveh*, signifying the *Self-existent One*, or *The Eternal*. This name is generally rendered in our English version of the Old Testament as *LORD*, printed in capitals.^s The Hebrew, *Ehyeh*, signifying *I Am*, is related in meaning and through derivation with the term *Yahveh* or *Jehovah*; and herein lies the significance of this name by which the Lord revealed Himself to Moses when the latter received the commission to go into Egypt and deliver the children of Israel from bondage: "Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."^t In the succeeding verse the Lord declares Himself to be "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." While Moses was in Egypt, the Lord further revealed Himself, saying "I am the *LORD*: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto

^q John 1:41; 4:25.

^r Luke 1:31; 2:21; Matt. 1:21, 25; see also verse 23 and compare Isa. 7:14; Luke 2:11. See further P. of G. P., Moses 6:51, 57; 7:20; 8:24. B. of M., 1 Nephi 10:4; 2 Nephi 10:3; Mosiah 3:8.

^s The name appears thus in Gen. 2:5; see also Exo. 6:2-4; and read for comparison Gen. 17:1; 35:11.

^t Exo. 3:13, 14; compare with respect to the fact of eternal duration expressed in this name, Isa. 44:6; John 8:58; Colos. 1:17; Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:4; see also P. of G. P., Moses 1:3 and the references there given.

Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.”^u The central fact connoted by this name, *I Am, or Jehovah*, the two having essentially the same meaning, is that of existence or duration that shall have no end, and which, judged by all human standards of reckoning, could have had no beginning; the name is related to such other titles as *Alpha and Omega*, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.^v

Jesus, when once assailed with question and criticism from certain Jews who regarded their Abrahamic lineage as an assurance of divine preferment, met their abusive words with the declaration: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am”.^w The true significance of this saying would be more plainly expressed were the sentence punctuated and pointed as follows: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham, was I AM;” which means the same as had He said—Before Abraham, was I, Jehovah. The captious Jews were so offended at hearing Him use a name which, through an erroneous rendering of an earlier scripture,^x they held was not to be uttered on pain of death, that they immediately took up stones with the intent of killing Him. The Jews regarded *Jehovah* as an ineffable name, not to be spoken; they substituted for it the sacred, though to them the not-forbidden name, *Adonai*, signifying *the Lord*. The original of the terms *Lord* and *God* as they appear in the Old Testament, was either *Yahveh* or *Adonai*; and the divine Being designated by these sacred names was, as shown by the scriptures cited, Jesus the Christ. John, evangelist and apostle, positively identifies Jesus Christ with *Adonai*, or the Lord who spoke through the voice of *Isaiah*,^y and with *Jehovah* who spoke through *Zechariah*.^z

^u Exo. 6:2, 3. Note 2, end of chapter.

^v Rev. 1:11, 17; 2:8; 22:13; compare Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12.

^w John 8:58.

^x Lev. 24:16. Note 3, end of chapter.

^y Isa. 6:8-11; and compare John 12:40, 41.

^z Zech. 12:10; compare John 19:37.

The name *Elohim* is of frequent occurrence in the Hebrew texts of the Old Testament, though it is not found in our English versions. In form the word is a Hebrew plural noun;^a but it connotes the plurality of excellence or intensity, rather than distinctively of number. It is expressive of supreme or absolute exaltation and power. *Elohim*, as understood and used in the restored Church of Jesus Christ, is the name-title of God the Eternal Father, whose firstborn Son in the spirit is *Jehovah*—the Only Begotten in the flesh, Jesus Christ.

Jesus of Nazareth, who in solemn testimony to the Jews declared Himself the *I Am* or *Jehovah*, who was God before Abraham lived on earth, was the same Being who is repeatedly proclaimed as the God who made covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God who led Israel from the bondage of Egypt to the freedom of the promised land, the one and only God known by direct and personal revelation to the Hebrew prophets in general.

The identity of Jesus Christ with the Jehovah of the Israelites was well understood by the Nephite prophets, and the truth of their teachings was confirmed by the risen Lord who manifested Himself unto them shortly after His ascension from the midst of the apostles at Jerusalem. This is the record: "And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying, Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world."^b

It would appear unnecessary to cite at greater length in substantiating our affirmation that Jesus Christ was God even before He assumed a body of flesh. During that ante-

^a The singular, "Eloah," appears only in poetic usage.

^b B. of M., 3 Nephi 11:13, 14; also 1 Nephi 17:40 and observe from verse 30 that the Redeemer is here spoken of as the God who delivered Israel. See further Mosiah 7:19. Chapter 39 herein.

mortal period there was essential difference between the Father and the Son, in that the former had already passed through the experiences of mortal life, including death and resurrection, and was therefore a Being possessed of a perfect, immortalized body of flesh and bones, while the Son was yet unembodied. Through His death and subsequent resurrection Jesus the Christ is today a Being like unto the Father in all essential characteristics.

A general consideration of scriptural evidence leads to the conclusion that God the Eternal Father has manifested Himself to earthly prophets or revelators on very few occasions, and then principally to attest the divine authority of His Son, Jesus Christ. As before shown, the Son was the active executive in the work of creation; throughout the creative scenes the Father appears mostly in a directing or consulting capacity. Unto Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses the Father revealed Himself, attesting the Godship of the Christ, and the fact that the Son was the chosen Savior of mankind.^c On the occasion of the baptism of Jesus, the Father's voice was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased";^d and at the transfiguration a similar testimony was given by the Father.^e On an occasion yet later, while Jesus prayed in anguish of soul, submitting Himself that the Father's purposes be fulfilled and the Father's name glorified, "Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."^f The resurrected and glorified Christ was announced by the Father to the Nephites on the western hemisphere, in these words: "Behold my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name: hear ye him."^g From the time of the occurrence last noted,

^c P. of G. P., Moses 1:6, 31-33; 2:1; 4:2, 3; 6:57; compare 7:35, 39, 47, 53-59; 8:16, 19, 23, 24; Abraham 3:22-28. See chapter 5 herein.

^d Matt. 3:17; also Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22.

^e Matt. 17:5; Luke 9:35.

^f John 12:28.

^g B. of M., 3 Nephi 11:7.

the voice of the Father was not heard again among men, so far as the scriptures aver, until the spring of 1820, when both the Father and the Son ministered unto the prophet Joseph Smith, the Father saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear him!"^h These are the instances of record in which the Eternal Father has been manifest in personal utterance or other revelation to man apart from the Son. God the Creator, the Jehovah of Israel, the Savior and Redeemer of all nations, kindreds and tongues, are the same, and He is Jesus the Christ.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4.

I. Names Given of God.—The significance of names when given of God finds illustration in many scriptural instances. The following are examples: "Jesus" meaning *Savior* (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31); "John," signifying *Jehovah's gift*, specifically applied to the Baptist, who was sent to earth to prepare the way for Jehovah's coming in the flesh (Luke 1:13); "Ishmael," signifying *God shall hear him* (Gen. 16:11); "Isaac," meaning *laughter* (Gen. 17:19, compare 18:10-15). As instances of names changed by divine authority to express added blessings, or special callings, consider the following: "Abram," which connoted *nobility* or *exaltation* and as usually rendered, *father of elevation*, was changed to "Abraham," *father of a multitude* which expressed the reason for the change as given at the time thereof, "for a father of many nations have I made thee" (Gen. 17:5). "Sarah," the name of Abraham's wife, and of uncertain distinctive meaning, was substituted by "Sarah" which signified *the princess* (Gen 17:15). "Jacob," a name given to the son of Isaac with reference to a circumstance attending his birth, and signifying a *supplanter*, was superseded by "Israel" meaning *a soldier of God, a prince of God*; as expressed in the words effecting the change, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (Gen. 32:28; compare 35:9, 10.) "Simon," meaning *a hearer*, the name of the man who became the chief apostle of Jesus Christ, was changed by the Lord to "Cephas" (Aramaic) or "Peter" (Greek) meaning *a rock* (John 1:42; Matt. 16:18; Luke 6:14). On James and John the sons of Zebedee, the Lord conferred the name or title "Boanerges" meaning *sons of thunder* (Mark 3:17).

The following is an instructive excerpt: "Name in the scriptures not only = that by which a person is designated, but frequently = all that is known to belong to the person having this designation, and the person himself. Thus 'the name of God' or 'of Jehovah,' etc., indicates His authority (Deut. 18:20; Matt.

21:9, etc.), His dignity and glory (Isa. 48:9, etc.), His protection and favor (Prov. 18:10, etc.), His character (Exo. 34:5, 14, compare 6, 7, etc.), His divine attributes in general (Matt. 6:9, etc.), etc. The Lord is said to set or put His name where the revelation or manifestation of His perfections is made (Deut. 12:5, 14:24, etc.). To believe in or on the name of Christ is to receive and treat Him in accordance with the revelation which the scriptures make of Him (John 1:12; 2:23), etc."—Smith's *Comprehensive Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Name."

2. Jesus Christ, the God of Israel.—"That Jesus Christ was the same Being who called Abraham from his native country, who led Israel out of the land of Egypt with mighty miracles and wonders, who made known to them His law amid the thunderings of Sinai, who delivered them from their enemies, who chastened them for their disobedience, who inspired their prophets, and whose glory filled Solomon's temple, is evident from all the inspired writings, and in none more so than in the Bib'e.

"His lamentation over Jerusalem evidences that, in His humanity, He had not forgotten His former exalted position: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!' (Matt. 23:37). It was this Creator of the world, this mighty Ruler, this Controller of the destinies of the human family, who, in His last moments, cried out in the agony of His soul, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" (Mark 15:34.)—From *Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel*, by Franklin D. Richards and James A. Little.

3. "Jehovah" a Name Not Uttered by the Jews.—Long prior to the time of Christ, certain schools among the Jews, ever intent on the observance of the letter of the law, though not without disregard of its spirit, had taught that the mere utterance of the name of God was blasphemous, and that the sin of so doing constituted a capital offense. This extreme conception arose from the accepted though uninspired interpretation of Lev. 24:16, "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death." We take the following from Smith's *Comprehensive Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Jehovah": "The true pronunciation of this name, [Yehovah] by which God was known to the Hebrews, has been entirely lost, the Jews themselves scrupulously avoiding every mention of it, and substituting in its stead one or other of the words with whose proper vowel-points it may happen to be written [Adonai, Lord, or Elohim, God] According to Jewish tradition it was pronounced but once a year by the high priest on the day of atonement when he entered the Holy of Holies; but on this point there is some doubt."

CHAPTER 5.

EARTHLY ADVENT OF THE CHRIST PREDICTED.

The coming of Christ to earth to tabernacle in the flesh was no unexpected or unheralded event. For centuries prior to the great occurrence the Jews had professed to be looking for the advent of their King; and, in the appointed ceremonials of worship as in private devotions, the coming of the promised Messiah was prominent as a matter of the supplication of Israel to Jehovah. True, there was much diversity in lay opinion and in rabbinical exposition as to the time and manner of His appearing; but the certainty thereof was fundamentally established in the beliefs and hopes of the Hebrew nation.

The records known to us as the books of the Old Testament, together with other inspired writings once regarded as authentic but excluded from later compilations as not strictly canonical, were current among the Hebrews at and long before the time of Christ's birth. These scriptures had their beginning in the proclamation of the law through Moses,^a who wrote the same, and delivered the writing into the official custody of the priests with an express command that it be read in the assemblies of the people at stated times. To these earlier writings were added the utterances of divinely commissioned prophets, the records of appointed historians, and the songs of inspired poets, as the centuries passed; so that at the time of our Lord's ministry the Jews possessed a great accumulation of writings accepted and revered by them as authoritative.^b These records are rich

^a Deut. 31:9, 24-26; compare 17:18-20.

^b "Articles of Faith," xiii:7-10.

in prediction and promise respecting the earthly advent of the Messiah, as are other scriptures to which the Israel of old had not access.

Adam, the patriarch of the race, rejoiced in the assurance of the Savior's appointed ministry, through the acceptance of which, he, the transgressor, might gain redemption. Brief mention of the plan of salvation, the author of which is Jesus Christ, appears in the promise given of God following the fall—that though the devil, represented by the serpent in Eden, should have power to bruise the heel of Adam's posterity, through the seed of the woman should come the power to bruise the adversary's head.^c It is significant that this assurance of eventual victory over sin and its inevitable effect, death, both of which were introduced to earth through Satan the arch-enemy of mankind, was to be realized through the offspring of woman; the promise was not made specifically to the man, nor to the pair. The only instance of offspring from woman dissociated from mortal fatherhood is the birth of Jesus the Christ, who was the earthly Son of a mortal mother, begotten by an immortal Father. He is the Only Begotten of the Eternal Father in the flesh, and was born of woman.

Through scriptures other than those embodied in the Old Testament we learn with greater fulness of the revelations of God to Adam respecting the coming of the Redeemer. As a natural and inevitable result of his disobedience, Adam had forfeited the high privilege he once enjoyed—that of holding direct and personal association with his God; nevertheless in his fallen state he was visited by an angel of the Lord, who revealed unto him the plan of redemption: "And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the

^c Gen. 3:15; compare Heb. 2:14; Rev. 12:9; 20:3.

angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son for evermore. And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and for ever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will.”^d

The Lord’s revelation to Adam making known the ordained plan whereby the Son of God was to take upon himself flesh in the meridian of time, and become the Redeemer of the world, was attested by Enoch, son of Jared and father of Methuselah. From the words of Enoch we learn that to him as to his great progenitor, Adam, the very name by which the Savior would be known among men was revealed—“which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men.”^e The recorded covenant of God with Abraham, and the reiteration and confirmation thereof with Isaac and in turn with Jacob—that through their posterity should all nations of the earth be blessed—presaged the birth of the Redeemer through that chosen lineage.^f Its fulfilment is the blessed heritage of the ages.

In pronouncing his patriarchal blessing upon the head of Judah, Jacob prophesied: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”^g That by Shiloh is meant the Christ is evidenced by the fulfilment of the conditions set forth in the predic-

^d P. of G. P., Moses 5:6-9. Note 1, end of chapter.

^e P. of G. P., Moses 6:52; study paragraphs 50-56; see also Gen. 5:18, 21-24; Jude 14. Note 4, end of chapter.

^f Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; compare Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8.

^g Gen. 49:10.

tion, in the state of the Jewish nation at the time of our Lord's birth.^h

Moses proclaimed the coming of a great Prophet in Israel, whose ministry was to be of such importance that all men who would not accept Him would be under condemnation; and that this prediction had sole reference to Jesus Christ is conclusively shown by later scriptures. Thus spake the Lord unto Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."ⁱ The system of sacrifice expressly enjoined in the Mosaic code was essentially a prototype of the sacrificial death to be accomplished by the Savior on Calvary. The blood of countless altar victims, slain by Israel's priests in the course of prescribed ritual, ran throughout the centuries from Moses to Christ as a prophetic flood in similitude of the blood of the Son of God appointed to be shed as an expiatory sacrifice for the redemption of the race. But, as already shown, the institution of bloody sacrifice as a type of the future death of Jesus Christ dates from the beginning of human history; since the offering of animal sacrifices through the shedding of blood was required of Adam, to whom the significance of the ordinance, as "a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father", was expressly defined.^j

The paschal lamb, slain for every Israelitish household at the annually recurring feast of the Passover, was a particular type of the Lamb of God who in due time would be slain for the sins of the world. The crucifixion of Christ was effected at the Passover season; and the consummation of the su-

^h Note 2, end of chapter.

ⁱ Deut. 18:15-19; compare John 1:45; Acts 3:22; 7:37; see also a specific confirmation by our Lord after His resurrection, 3 Nephi 20:23.

^j Note 1, end of chapter.

preme Sacrifice, of which the paschal lambs had been but lesser prototypes, led Paul the apostle to affirm in later times: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."^a

Job in the day of dire affliction rejoiced in his testimony of the coming Messiah, and declared with prophetic conviction: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."^k The songs of David the psalmist abound in oft-recurring allusion to the earthly life of Christ, many circumstances of which are described in detail, and, as to these, corroboration of the utterances is found in New Testament scriptures.^l

Isaiah, whose prophetic office was honored by the personal testimony of Christ and the apostles, manifested in numerous passages the burden of his conviction relating to the great event of the Savior's advent and ministry on earth. With the forcefulness of direct revelation he told of the Virgin's divine maternity, whereof Immanuel should be born, and his prediction was reiterated by the angel of the Lord, over seven centuries later.^m Looking down through the ages the prophet saw the accomplishment of the divine purposes as if already achieved, and sang in triumph: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to

^a 1 Cor. 5:7. For references to Christ as the Lamb of God, see John 1:29, 36; 1 Peter 1:19; Rev. chaps. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22; also B. of M., 1 Nephi 10:10, and chaps. 11, 12, 13, 14; 2 Nephi 31:4, 5, 6; 33:14; Alma 7:14; Mormon 9:2, 3; Doc. and Cov. 58:11; 132:19.

^k Job 19:25; see also verses 26-27.

^l Instances: Psalm 2:7; compare Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5. Psa. 16:10; compare Acts 13:34-37. Psa. 22:18; compare Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24. Psa. 41:9; compare John 13:18. Psa. 69:9 and 21; compare Matt. 27:34, 48; Mark 15:23; John 19:29; and John 2:17. Psa. 110:1 and 4; compare Matt. 22:44; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44; and Heb. 5:6. Psa. 118:22, 23; compare Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:4, 7. The following are known specifically as Messianic Psalms: 2, 21, 22, 45, 67, 69, 89, 96, 110, 132; in them the psalmist extols in poetic measure the excellencies of the Messiah, and the certainty of His coming.

^m Isa. 7:14; compare Matt. 1:21-23.

establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever."ⁿ

Immediately prior to its fulfilment, the blessed promise was repeated by Gabriel, sent from the presence of God to the chosen Virgin of Nazareth.^o As made known to the prophet and by him proclaimed, the coming Lord was the living Branch that should spring from the undying root typified in the family of Jesse;^p the foundation Stone insuring the stability of Zion;^q the Shepherd of the house of Israel;^r the Light of the world;^s to Gentile as well as Jew; the Leader and Commander of His people.^t The same inspired voice predicted the forerunner who should cry in the wilderness: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."^u

Isaiah was permitted to read the scroll of futurity as to many distinguishing conditions to attend the Messiah's lowly life and atoning death. In Him the prophet saw One who would be despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, One to be wounded and bruised for the transgressions of the race, on whom would be laid the iniquity of us all—a patient and willing Sacrifice, silent under affliction, as a lamb brought to the slaughter. The Lord's dying with sinners, and His burial in the tomb of the wealthy were likewise declared with prophetic certainty.^b

Unto Jeremiah came the word of the Lord in terms of plainness, declaring the sure advent of the King by whom the safety of both Judah and Israel should be assured;^v the

ⁿ Isa. 9:6, 7.

^o Luke 1:26-33.

^p Isa. 11:1 and 10; compare Rom. 15:12; Rev. 5:5; 22:16; see also Jer. 23:5, 6.

^q Isa. 28:16; compare Psa. 118:22; Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33; 10:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8.

^r Isa. 40:9-11; compare John 10:11, 14; Heb. 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4; see also Ezek. 34:23.

^s Isa. 42:1; see also 9:2; 49:6; 60:3; compare Matt. 4:14-16; Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; 26:18; Eph. 5:8, 14.

^t Isa. 55:4; compare John 18:37.

^u Isa. 40:3; compare Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23.

^b Isa. 53; study the entire chapter; compare Acts 8:32-35.

^v Jer. 23:5, 6; see also 33:14-16.

Prince of the House of David, through whom the divine promise to the son of Jesse should be realized.^w Under the same spirit prophesied Ezekiel,^x Hosea,^y and Micah.^z Zechariah broke off in the midst of fateful prediction to voice the glad song of thanksgiving and praise as he beheld in vision the simple pageantry of the King's triumphal entry into the city of David.^a Then the prophet bewailed the grief of the conscience-smitten nation, by whom, as was foreseen, the Savior of humankind would be pierced, even unto death;^b and showed that, when subdued by contrition His own people would ask, "What are these wounds in thy hands?", the Lord would answer: "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."^c The very price to be paid for the betrayal of the Christ to His death was foretold as in parable.^d

The fact, that these predictions of the Old Testament prophets had reference to Jesus Christ and to Him only, is put beyond question by the attestation of the resurrected Lord. To the assembled apostles He said: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."^e

John the Baptist, whose ministry immediately preceded that of the Christ, proclaimed the coming of One mightier than himself, One who should baptize with the Holy Ghost, and specifically identified Jesus of Nazareth as that One,

^w Jer. 30:9.

^x Ezek. 34:23; 37:24, 25.

^y Hos. 11:11; compare Matt. 2:15.

^z Mic. 5:2; compare Matt. 2:6; John 7:42.

^a Zech. 9:9; compare Matt. 21:4-9.

^b Zech. 12:10; compare John 19:37.

^c Zech. 13:6.

^d Zech. 11:12, 13; compare Matt. 26:15; 27:3-10.

^e Luke 24:44, 46; see also verses 25-27.

the Son of God, the Lamb who should assume the burden of the world's sins.^f

The predictions thus far cited as relating to the life, ministry, and death of the Lord Jesus, are the utterances of prophets who, excepting Adam and Enoch, lived and died on the eastern hemisphere. All save John the Baptist are of Old Testament record, and he, a contemporary of the Christ in mortality, figures in the early chapters of the Gospels. It is important to know that the scriptures of the western hemisphere are likewise explicit in the declaration of the great truth that the Son of God would be born in the flesh. The Book of Mormon contains a history of a colony of Israelites, of the tribe of Joseph, who left Jerusalem 600 B. C., during the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, on the eve of the subjugation of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar and the inauguration of the Babylonian captivity. This colony was led by divine guidance to the American continent, whereon they developed into a numerous and mighty people; though, divided by dissension, they formed two opposing nations known respectively as Nephites and Lamanites. The former cultivated the arts of industry and refinement, and preserved a record embodying both history and scripture, while the latter became degenerate and delased. The Nephites suffered extinction about 400 A. D., but the Lamanites lived on in their degraded course, and are today extant upon the land as the American Indians.^g

The Nephite annals from the beginning thereof down to the time of our Lord's birth abound in prediction and promise of the Christ; and this chronicle is followed by a record of the actual visitation of the resurrected Savior to the Nephites, and the establishment of His Church among them. Unto Lehi, the leader of the colony, the Lord revealed the time, place, and manner of Christ's then future advent,

^f Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:15, 26, 27, 29-36; see also Acts 1:5, 8; 11:16; 19:4.

^g Note 3, end of chapter.

together with many important facts of His ministry, and the preparatory work of John the forerunner. This revelation was given while the company was journeying in the wilderness of Arabia, prior to their crossing the great waters. The prophecy is thus written by Nephi, a son of Lehi and his successor in the prophetic calling: "Yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews; even a Messiah; or, in other words, a Savior of the world. And he also spake concerning the prophets, how great a number had testified of these things concerning this Messiah, of whom he had spoken, or this Redeemer of the world. Wherefore all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be, save they should rely on this Redeemer. And he spake also concerning a prophet who should come before the Messiah, to prepare the way of the Lord; yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight; for there standeth one among you whom ye know not; and he is mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. And much spake my father concerning this thing. And my father said he should baptize in Bethabara, beyond Jordan; and he also said he should baptize with water; even that he should baptize the Messiah with water. And after he had baptized the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record, that he had baptized the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world. And it came to pass after my father had spoken these words, he spake unto my brethren concerning the gospel which should be preached among the Jews; and also concerning the dwindling of the Jews in unbelief. And after they had slain the Messiah, who should come, and after he had been slain, he should rise from the dead, and should make himself manifest, by the Holy Ghost, unto the Gentiles."^h

^h B. of M., 1 Nephi 10:4-11.

At a later time Nephi writes, not as his father's scribe, but as a prophet and revelator voicing the word of God as made known to himself. He was permitted to behold in vision and to declare to his people the circumstances of the Messiah's birth, His baptism by John and the ministration of the Holy Ghost with its accompanying sign of the dove; he beheld our Lord moving as a Teacher of righteousness among the people, healing the afflicted and rebuking spirits of evil; he saw and bore record of the dread scenes of Calvary; he beheld and predicted the calling of the chosen Twelve, the apostles of the Lamb, for so these were designated by Him who vouchsafed the vision. Moreover he told of the iniquity of the Jews, who were seen in contention with the apostles; and thus concludes the portentous prophecy: "And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying, Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb."ⁱ Soon after the defection whereby the distinction between Nephites and Lamanites was established, Jacob, a brother of Nephi, continued in prophecy of the assured coming of the Messiah, specifically declaring that He would minister at Jerusalem and affirming the necessity of His atoning death as the ordained means of human redemption.^j The prophet Abinadi, in his fearless denunciation of sin to the wicked king Noah, preached the Christ who was to come;^k and righteous Benjamin, who was at once prophet and king, proclaimed the same great truth to his people about 125 B. C. So taught Alma^l in his inspired admonition to his wayward son, Corianton; and so also Amulek^m in his contention with Zeezrom. So proclaimed the Lamanite prophet, Samuel, only five years prior

ⁱ B. of M., 1 Nephi chapters 11 and 12; see also 19:10.

^j B. of M., 2 Nephi 9:5, 6; 10:3. See also Nephi's prophecy 25:12-14; and chap. 26.

^k B. of M., Mosiah 13:33-35; 15:1-13.

^l B. of M., Alma 39:15; 40:1-3.

^m B. of M., Alma 11:31-44.

to the actual occurrence; furthermore he specified the signs by which the birth of Jesus in Judea would be made known to the people of the western world. Said he: "Behold, I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name. And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day, therefore there shall be one day and a night, and a day, as if it were one day, and there were no night; and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun, and also of its setting; therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night; nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before he is born. And behold there shall a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you. And behold this is not all, there shall be many signs and wonders in heaven."ⁿ

Thus the scriptures of both hemispheres and in all ages of ante-meridian time bore solemn testimony to the certainty of Messiah's advent; thus the holy prophets of old voiced the word of revelation predicting the coming of the world's King and Lord, through whom alone is salvation provided, and redemption from death made sure. It is a characteristic of prophets sent of God that they possess and proclaim a personal assurance of the Christ, "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."^o Not a word of inspired prophecy relating to the great event has been found void. The literal fulfilment of the predictions is ample attestation of their origin in divine revelation, and proof conclusive of the divinity of Him whose coming was so abundantly foretold.

ⁿ B. of M., Helaman 14:1-6; compare 3 Nephi 1:4-21
^o Rev. 19:10.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5.

i. The Antiquity of Sacrifice as a Prototype of Christ's Atoning Death.—While the Biblical record expressly attests the offering of sacrifices long prior to Israel's exodus from Egypt—e. g. by Abel and by Cain (Gen. 4:3, 4); by Noah after the deluge (Gen. 8:20); by Abraham (Gen. 22:2, 13); by Jacob (Gen. 31:54; 46:1)—it is silent concerning the divine origin of sacrifice as a propitiatory requirement prefiguring the atoning death of Jesus Christ. The difficulty of determining time and circumstance, under which the offering of symbolical sacrifices originated amongst mankind, is recognized by all investigators save those who admit the validity of modern revelation. The necessity of assuming early instruction from God to man on the subject has been asserted by many Bible scholars. Thus, the writer of the article "Sacrifice" in the *Cassell Bible Dictionary* says: "The idea of sacrifice is prominent throughout the scriptures, and one of the most ancient and widely recognized in the rites of religion throughout the world. There is also a remarkable similarity in the developments and applications of the idea. On these and other accounts it has been judiciously inferred that sacrifice formed an element in the primeval worship of man; and that its universality is not merely an indirect argument for the unity of the human race, but an illustration and confirmation of the first inspired pages of the world's history. The notion of sacrifice can hardly be viewed as a product of unassisted human nature, and must therefore be traced to a higher source and viewed as a divine revelation to primitive man."

Smith's *Dict. of the Bible* presents the following: "In tracing the history of sacrifice from its first beginning to its perfect development in the Mosaic ritual, we are at once met by the long-disputed question as to the origin of sacrifice, whether it arose from a natural instinct of man, sanctioned and guided by God, or was the subject of some distinct primeval revelation. There can be no doubt that sacrifice was sanctioned by God's Law, with a special, typical reference to the Atonement of Christ; its universal prevalence, independent of, and often opposed to, man's natural reasonings on his relation to God, shows it to have been primeval, and deeply rooted in the instincts of humanity. Whether it was first enjoined by an external command, or was based on that sense of sin and lost communion with God, which is stamped by His hand on the heart of man—is an historical question, perhaps insoluble."

The difficulty vanishes, and the "historical question" as to the origin of sacrifice is definitely solved by the revelations of God in the current dispensation, whereby parts of the record of Moses—not contained in the Bible—have been restored to human knowledge. The scripture quoted in the text (pp. 43, 44) makes clear the fact that the offering of sacrifices was required of Adam after his transgression, and that the significance of the divinely established requirement was explained in fulness to the patriarch of the race. The shedding of the blood of animals in sacrifice

to God, as a prototype "of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father," dates from the time immediately following the fall. Its origin is based on a specific revelation to Adam. See P. of G. P., Moses 5:5-8.

2. Jacob's Prophecy Concerning "Shiloh."—The prediction of the patriarch Jacob—that the sceptre should not depart from Judah before the coming of Shiloh—has given rise to much disputation among Bible students. Some insist that "Shiloh" is the name of a place and not that of a person. That there was a place known by that name is beyond question (see Josh. 18:1; 19:51; 21:2; 22:9; 1 Sam. 1:3; Jer. 7:12); but the name occurring in Gen. 49:10 is plainly that of a person. It should be known that the use of the word in the King James or authorized version of the Bible is held to be correct by many eminent authorities. Thus, in Dummelow's *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, we read: "This verse has always been regarded by both Jews and Christians as a remarkable prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. . . . On the rendering given above, the whole verse foretells that Judah would retain authority until the advent of the rightful ruler, the Messiah, to whom all peoples would gather. And, broadly speaking, it may be said that the last traces of Jewish legislative power (as vested in the Sanhedrin) did not disappear until the coming of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem, from which time His kingdom was set up among men."

Adam Clarke, in his exhaustive Bible Commentary, briefly analyzes the objections urged against the admissibility of this passage as applying to the Messiah's advent, and dismisses them all as unfounded. His conclusion as to the meaning of the passage is thus worded: "Judah shall continue a distinct tribe until the Messiah shall come; and it did so; and after His coming it was confounded with the others, so that all distinction has been ever since lost."

Prof. Douglas, as cited in Smith's Dictionary, "claims that something of Judah's sceptre still remained, a total eclipse being no proof that the day is at an end—that the proper fulfilment of the prophecy did not begin till David's time, and is consummated in Christ according to Luke 1:32, 33."

The accepted meaning of the word by derivation is "Peaceable," and this is applicable to the attributes of the Christ, who in Isa. 9:6, is designated the Prince of Peace.

Eusebius, who lived between 260 and 339 A. D., and is known in ecclesiastical history as Bishop of Cæsarea, wrote: "At the time that Herod was king, who was the first foreigner that reigned over the Jewish people, the prophecy recorded by Moses received its fulfilment, viz. 'That a prince should not fail of Judah, nor a ruler from his loins, until He should come for whom it is reserved, the expectation of nations.'" (The quoted passage is founded on the Septuagint rendering of Genesis 49:10).

Some critics have held that in Jacob's use of the word "Shiloh" he did not intend it as a name or proper noun at all. The writer of the article "Shiloh" in Cassell's *Bible Dictionary*

says: "The preponderance of evidence is in favor of the Messianic interpretation, but opinions are very divided respecting the retention of the word 'Shiloh' as a proper name. . . . Notwithstanding all the objections that are urged against it being so regarded, we are of the opinion that it is rightly considered to be a proper name, and that the English version represents the true sense of the passage. We recommend those who wish to enter more fully into a question which cannot well be discussed without Hebrew criticism, to the excellent notes upon Gen. 49:10 in the 'Commentary on the Pentateuch' by Keil and Delitzsch. Here the text is thus rendered: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, till Shiloh come, and the willing obedience of the nations be to him.'

"Notwithstanding the slight put upon the Messianic interpretation by some writers, even those from whom we should scarcely expect it, we see this explanation confirmed and not weakened in the events of history. The text is not taken to mean that Judah should at no time be without a royal ruler of his own, but that the regal power should not finally cease from Judah until Shiloh had come. The objections founded on the Babylonian captivity, and similar intermissions, are of no force, because it is the complete and final termination which is pointed out, and that only happened after the time of Christ." See further *The Book of Prophecy*, by G. Smith, LL.D., p. 320. See also *Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel*, by Franklin D. Richards and James A. Little, article "Christ's First Coming."

3. Nephites and Lamanites.—The progenitors of the Nephite nation were led from Jerusalem, 600 B. C., by Lehi, a Jewish prophet of the tribe of Manasseh. His immediate family, at the time of their departure from Jerusalem, comprised his wife Sariah, and their sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi; at a later stage of the history, daughters are mentioned, but whether any of these were born before the family exodus we are not told. Beside his own family, the colony of Lehi included Zoram, and Ishmael, the latter an Israelite of the tribe of Ephraim. Ishmael, with his family, joined Lehi in the wilderness; and his descendants were numbered with the nation of whom we are speaking. The company journeyed somewhat east of south, keeping near the borders of the Red Sea; then, changing their course to the eastward, crossed the peninsula of Arabia; and there, on the shores of the Arabian Sea, built and provisioned a vessel in which they committed themselves to divine care upon the waters. Their voyage carried them eastward across the Indian Ocean, then over the south Pacific Ocean to the western coast of South America, whercon they landed (590 B. C.) . . . The people established themselves on what to them was the land of promise; many children were born, and in the course of a few generations a numerous posterity held possession of the land. After the death of Lehi, a division occurred, some of the people accepting as their leader, Nephi, who had been duly appointed to the prophetic office; while the rest proclaimed Laman, the eldest of Lehi's sons, as their chief. Henceforth the divided

people were known as Nephites and Lamanites respectively. At times they observed toward each other fairly friendly relations; but generally they were opposed, the Lamanites manifesting implacable hatred and hostility toward their Nephite kindred. The Nephites advanced in the arts of civilization, built large cities and established prosperous commonwealths; yet they often fell into transgression; and the Lord chastened them by allowing their foes to become victorious. They spread northward, occupying the northern part of South America; then, crossing the Isthmus, they extended their domain over the southern, central and eastern portions of what is now the United States of America. The Lamanites, while increasing in numbers, fell under the curse of darkness; they became dark in skin and benighted in spirit, forgot the God of their fathers, lived a wild nomadic life, and degenerated into the fallen state in which the American Indians—their lineal descendants—were found by those who rediscovered the western continent in later times. See the author's *Articles of Faith* xiv:7, 8.

4. The First Gospel Dispensation.—The gospel of Jesus Christ was revealed to Adam. Faith in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son the Savior of Adam and all his posterity, repentance of sin, water baptism by immersion, and the reception of the Holy Ghost as a divine bestowal were proclaimed in the beginning of human history as the essentials to salvation. The following scriptures attest this fact. "And thus the Gospel began to be preached, from the beginning, being declared by holy angels sent forth from the presence of God, and by his own voice, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Moses 5:58). The prophet Enoch thus testified: "But God hath made known unto our fathers that all men must repent. And he called upon our father Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh. And he also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you" (Moses 6:50-52; read also 53-61). "And now, behold, I say unto you: This is the plan of salvation unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time" (62). "And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water. And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man. And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and for ever" (64-66). Compare Doc. and Cov. 29:42.

CHAPTER 6.

THE MERIDIAN OF TIME.

Unto Moses, with whom the Lord spake "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend,"^a the course of the human race, both as then past and future, was made known; and the coming of the Redeemer was recognized by him as the event of greatest import in all the happenings to which the earth and its inhabitants would be witness. The curse of God had aforetime fallen upon the wicked, and upon the earth because of them, "For they would not hearken unto his voice, nor believe on his Only Begotten Son, even him whom he declared should come in the meridian of time, who was prepared from before the foundation of the world."^b In this scripture appears the earliest mention of the expressive and profoundly significant designation of the period in which the Christ should appear—the meridian of time. If the expression be regarded as figurative, be it remembered the figure is the Lord's.

The term "meridian", as commonly used, conveys the thought of a principal division of time or space;^c thus we speak of the hours before the daily noon as ante-meridian (a. m.) and those after noon as post-meridian (p. m.). So the years and the centuries of human history are divided by the great event of the birth of Jesus Christ. The years preceding that epoch-making occurrence are now designated as time *Before Christ* (B. C.); while subsequent years are each

^a Exo. 33:11; see also Numb. 12:8; Deut. 34:10; compare P. of G. P., Moses 1:2, 11, 31.

^b P. of G. P., Moses 5:57; for later mention of the "meridian of time," see 6:56-62; and 7:46; and compare Doc. and Cov. 20:26; 39:3.

^c "Meridian: figuratively, the highest point or culminating-point of anything; the zenith; as the meridian of life."—"New Stand. Dict."

specified as a certain *Year of our Lord*, or, as in the Latin tongue, *Anno Domini* (A. D.). Thus the world's chronology has been adjusted and systematized with reference to the time of the Savior's birth; and this method of reckoning is in use among all Christian nations. It is instructive to note that a similar system was adopted by the isolated branch of the house of Israel that had been brought from the land of Palestine to the western continent; for from the appearance of the promised sign among the people betokening the birth of Him who had been so abundantly predicted by their prophets, the Nephite reckoning of the years, starting with the departure of Lehi and his colony from Jerusalem, was superseded by the annals of the new era.^d

The occasion of the Savior's advent was preappointed; and the time thereof was specifically revealed through authorized prophets on each of the hemispheres. The long history of the Israelitish nation had unfolded a succession of events that found a relative culmination in the earthly mission of the Messiah. That we may the better comprehend the true significance of the Lord's life and ministry while in the flesh, some consideration should be given to the political, social, and religious condition of the people amongst whom He appeared and with whom He lived and died. Such consideration involves at least a brief review of the antecedent history of the Hebrew nation. The posterity of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob had early come to be known by the title in which they took undying pride and found inspiring promise, Israelites, or the children of Israel.^e Collectively they were so designated throughout the dark days of their bondage in Egypt;^f so during the four decades of the exodus and the return to the land of promise,^g and on through the period of their prosperity as a mighty people under the ad-

^d B. of M., 3 Nephi 2:8; compare 4 Nephi 1:1, 21; Mormon 8:6; Moroni 10:1.

^e Gen. 32:28; 35:10.

^f Exo. 1:1, 7; 9:6, 7; 12:3, etc.

^g Exo. 12:35, 40; 13:19; 15:1; Numb. 20:1, 19, 24, etc.

ministration of the judges, and as a united monarchy during the successive reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon.^h

Immediately following the death of Solomon, about 975 B. C. according to the most generally accepted chronology, the nation was disrupted by revolt. The tribe of Judah, part of the tribe of Benjamin, and small remnants of a few other tribes remained true to the royal succession, and accepted Rehoboam, son of Solomon, as their king; while the rest, usually spoken of as the Ten Tribes, broke their allegiance to the house of David, and made Jeroboam, an Ephraimite, their king. The Ten Tribes retained the title Kingdom of Israel though also known as Ephraim.ⁱ Rehoboam and his adherents were distinctively called the Kingdom of Judah. For about two hundred and fifty years the two kingdoms maintained their separate autonomy; then, about 722 or 721 B. C., the independent status of the Kingdom of Israel was destroyed, and the captive people were transported to Assyria by Shalmanezer and others. Subsequently they disappeared so completely as to be called the Lost Tribes. The Kingdom of Judah was recognized as a nation for about one hundred and thirty years longer; then, about 588 B. C., it was brought into subjection by Nebuchadnezzar, through whom the Babylonian captivity was inaugurated. For three score years and ten Judah was kept in exile and virtual bondage, in consequence of their transgression as had been predicted through Jeremiah.^j Then the Lord softened the hearts of their captors, and their restoration was begun under the decree of Cyrus the Persian, who had subdued the Babylonian kingdom. The Hebrew people were permitted to return to Judea, and to enter upon the work of rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem.^k

^h See mention throughout the books of Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and references therein.

ⁱ Isa. 11:13; 17:3; Ezek. 37:16-22; Hos. 4:17.

^j Jer. 25:11, 12; see also 29:10.

^k Ezra 1:1-4; the author, "House of the Lord," pp. 47-53; also "Articles of Faith" xvii:1-22.

A great company of the exiled Hebrews availed themselves of this opportunity to return to the lands of their fathers, though many elected to remain in the country of their captivity, preferring Babylon to Israel. The "whole congregation" of the Jews who returned from the Babylonian exile were but "forty and two thousand three hundred and three score, beside their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven."^l The relatively small size of the migrating nation is further shown by the register of their beasts of burden.^m While those who did return strove valiantly to reestablish themselves as the house of David, and to regain some measure of their former prestige and glory, the Jews were never again a truly independent people. In turn they were preyed upon by Greece, Egypt, and Syria; but about 164-163 B. C., the people threw off, in part at least, the alien yoke, as a result of the patriotic revolt led by the Maccabees, the most prominent of whom was Judas Maccabeus. The temple service, which had been practically abolished through the proscription of victorious foes, was reestablished.ⁿ In the year 163 B. C., the sacred structure was rededicated, and the joyful occasion was thereafter celebrated in annual festival as the Feast of Dedication.ⁿ During the reign of the Maccabees, however, the temple fell into an almost ruinous condition, more as a result of the inability of the reduced and impoverished people to maintain it than through any further decline of religious zeal. In the hope of insuring a greater measure of national protection, the Jews entered into an unequal alliance with the Romans and eventually became tributary to them, in which condition the Jewish nation continued throughout the period of our Lord's ministry. In the meridian of time Rome was virtually mistress of the world. When Christ was born Augustus Cæsar^o was emperor of

^l Ezra 2:64-67.

^m "House of the Lord," pp. 51-53.

ⁿ Josephus, Ant. xii:6 and 7; 2 Maccabees 2:19; 10:1-8; also John 10:22.

^o Luke 2:1.

Rome, and the Idumean, Herod,^b surnamed the Great, was the vassal king of Judea.

Some semblance of national autonomy was maintained by the Jews under Roman dominion, and their religious ceremonials were not seriously interfered with. The established orders in the priesthood were recognized, and the official acts of the national council, or Sanhedrin,^q were held to be binding by Roman law; though the judicial powers of this body did not extend to the infliction of capital punishment without the sanction of the imperial executive. It was the established policy of Rome to allow to her tributary and vassal peoples freedom in worship so long as the mythological deities, dear to the Romans, were not maligned nor their altars desecrated.^a

Needless to say, the Jews took not kindly to alien domination, though for many generations they had been trained in that experience, their reduced status having ranged from nominal vassalage to servile bondage. They were already largely a dispersed people. All the Jews in Palestine at the time of Christ's birth constituted but a small remnant of the great Davidic nation. The Ten Tribes, distinctively the aforetime kingdom of Israel, had then long been lost to history, and the people of Judah had been widely scattered among the nations.

In their relations with other peoples the Jews generally endeavored to maintain a haughty exclusiveness, which brought upon them Gentile ridicule. Under Mosaic law Israel had been required to keep apart from other nations; they attached supreme importance to their Abrahamic lineage as children of the covenant, "an holy people unto the Lord," whom He had chosen "to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth".^r Judah had experienced the woful effects of dalliance with pagan

^b Matt. 2:1. Page 106.

^q Note 1, end of chapter.

^r Deut. 7:6; see also 10:15; Exo. 19:5, 6; Psa. 135:4; Isa. 41:8; 45:4; compare 1 Peter 2:9.

^a Note 6, end of chapter.

nations, and, at the time we are now considering, a Jew who permitted himself unnecessary association with a Gentile became an unclean being requiring ceremonial cleansing to free him from defilement. Only in strict isolation did the leaders find hope of insuring the perpetuity of the nation.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Jews hated all other peoples and were reciprocally despized and contemned by all others. They manifested especial dislike for the Samaritans, perhaps because this people persisted in their efforts to establish some claim of racial relationship. These Samaritans were a mixed people, and were looked upon by the Jews as a mongrel lot, unworthy of decent respect. When the Ten Tribes were led into captivity by the king of Assyria, foreigners were sent to populate Samaria.^s These intermarried with such Israelites as had escaped the captivity; and some modification of the religion of Israel, embodying at least the profession of Jehovah worship, survived in Samaria. The Samaritan rituals were regarded by the Jews as unorthodox, and the people as reprobate. At the time of Christ the enmity between Jew and Samaritan was so intense that travelers between Judea and Galilee would make long detours rather than pass through the province of Samaria which lay between. The Jews would have no dealings with the Samaritans.^t

The proud feeling of self-sufficiency, the obsession for exclusiveness and separation—so distinctively a Jewish trait at that time—was inculcated at the maternal knee and emphasized in synagog and school. The Talmud,^u which in codified form post-dates the time of Christ's ministry, enjoined all Jews against reading the books of alien nations, declaring that none who so offended could consistently hope for Jehovah's favor.^v Josephus gives his endorsement to

^s 2 Kings 17:24.

^t John 4:9; Luke 9:51-53. Pages 172, 183 herein.

^u Note 2, end of chapter.

^v Bab. Talmud, Sanhedrin, 90.

similar injunction, and records that wisdom among the Jews meant only familiarity with the law and ability to discourse thereon.^w A thorough acquaintanceship with the law was demanded as strongly as other studies were discountenanced. Thus the lines between learned and unlearned came to be rigidly drawn; and, as an inevitable consequence those who were accounted learned, or so considered themselves, looked down upon their unscholarly fellows as a class distinct and inferior.^x

Long before the birth of Christ, the Jews had ceased to be a united people even in matters of the law, though the law was their chief reliance as a means of maintaining national solidarity. As early as four score years after the return from the Babylonian exile, and we know not with accuracy how much earlier, there had come to be recognized, as men having authority, certain scholars afterward known as scribes, and honored as rabbis^y or teachers. In the days of Ezra and Nehemiah these specialists in the law constituted a titled class, to whom deference and honor were paid. Ezra is designated "the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel".^z The scribes of those days did valuable service under Ezra, and later under Nehemiah, in compiling the sacred writings then extant; and in Jewish usage those appointed as guardians and expounders of the law came to be known as members of the Great Synagog, or Great Assembly, concerning which we have little information through canonical channels. According to Talmudic record, the organization consisted of one hundred and twenty eminent scholars. The scope of their labors, according to the admonition traditionally perpetuated by themselves, is thus expressed: *Be careful in judgment; set up many scholars, and*

^w Josephus, Ant. xx, 11:2.

^x Note the emphasis given to this distinction in John 7:45-49; see also 9:34.

^y Note 3, end of chapter.

^z Ezra 7:11; see also verses 6, 10, 12.

make a hedge about the law. They followed this behest by much study and careful consideration of all traditional details in administration; by multiplying scribes and rabbis unto themselves; and, as some of them interpreted the requirement of setting up many scholars, by writing many books and tractates; moreover, they made a fence or hedge about the law by adding numerous rules, which prescribed with great exactness the officially established proprieties for every occasion.

Scribes and rabbis were exalted to the highest rank in the estimation of the people, higher than that of the Levitical or priestly orders; and rabbinical sayings were given precedence over the utterances of the prophets, since the latter were regarded as but messengers or spokesmen, whereas the living scholars were of themselves sources of wisdom and authority. Such secular powers as Roman suzerainty permitted the Jews to retain were vested in the hierarchy, whose members were able thus to gather unto themselves practically all official and professional honors. As a natural result of this condition, there was practically no distinction between Jewish civil and ecclesiastical law, either as to the code or its administration. Rabbinism comprised as an essential element the doctrine of the equal authority of oral rabbinical tradition with the written word of the law. The aggrandizement implied in the application of the title "Rabbi" and the self-pride manifest in welcoming such adulation were especially forbidden by the Lord, who proclaimed Himself the one Master; and, as touching the interpretation of the title held by some as "father", Jesus proclaimed but one Father and He in heaven: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ."^a

^a Matt. 23:8-10; see also John 1:38; 3:2.

The scribes, whether so named or designated by the more distinguishing appellation, rabbis, were repeatedly denounced by Jesus, because of the dead literalism of their teachings, and the absence of the spirit of righteousness and virile morality therefrom; and in such denunciations the Pharisees are often coupled with the scribes. The judgment of the Christ upon them is sufficiently expressed by His withering imprecation: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"^b

The origin of the Pharisees is not fixed by undisputed authority as to either time or circumstance; though it is probable that the sect or party had a beginning in connection with the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. New ideas and added conceptions of the meaning of the law were promulgated by Jews who had imbibed of the spirit of Babylon; and the resulting innovations were accepted by some and rejected by others. The name "Pharisee" does not occur in the Old Testament, nor in the Apocrypha, though it is probable that the Assideans mentioned in the books of the Maccabees^c were the original Pharisees. By derivation the name expresses the thought of separatism; the Pharisee, in the estimation of his class, was distinctively set apart from the common people, to whom he considered himself as truly superior as the Jews regarded themselves in contrast with other nations. Pharisees and scribes were one in all essentials of profession, and rabinism was specifically their doctrine.

In the New Testament the Pharisees are often mentioned as in opposition to the Sadducees; and such were the relations of the two parties that it becomes a simpler matter to contrast one with the other than to consider each separately. The Sadducees came into existence as a reactionary organi-

^b Matt. 23:13, 14, 15, 23, etc., read the entire chapter; compare Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:46; see also as instances of special denunciation of the Pharisees Luke 11:37-44. Note also that the lawyers, who were professionally associated with the scribes, are included in the sweeping criticism: verses 45-54. See pages 552-560 herein.

^c 1 Maccabees 2:42; 7:13-17; 2 Maccabees 14:8.

zation during the second century B. C., in connection with an insurgent movement against the Maccabean party. Their platform was that of opposition to the ever-increasing mass of traditional lore, with which the law was not merely being fenced or hedged about for safety, but under which it was being buried. The Sadducees stood for the sanctity of the law as written and preserved, while they rejected the whole mass of rabbinical precept both as orally transmitted and as collated and codified in the records of the scribes. The Pharisees formed the more popular party; the Sadducees figured as the aristocratic minority. At the time of Christ's birth the Pharisees existed as an organized body numbering over six thousand men, with Jewish women very generally on their side in sympathy and effort;^d while the Sadducees were so small a faction and of such limited power that, when they were placed in official positions, they generally followed the policy of the Pharisees as a matter of incumbent expediency. The Pharisees were the Puritans of the time, unflinching in their demand for compliance with the traditional rules as well as the original law of Moses. In this connection note Paul's confession of faith and practise when arraigned before Agrippa—"That after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."^e The Sadducees prided themselves on strict compliance with the law, as they construed it, irrespective of all scribes or rabbis. The Sadducees stood for the temple and its prescribed ordinances, the Pharisees for the synagog and its rabbinical teachings. It is difficult to decide which were the more technical if we judge each party by the standard of its own profession. By way of illustration: the Sadducees held to the literal and full exaction of the Mosaic penalty—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth^f—while the Pharisees contended on the authority of rabbinical dictum, that the wording was figurative, and

^d Josephus, *Antiquities*, xvii, 2:4.

^e Acts 26:5; see also 23:6; Philip. 3:5.

^f Exo. 21:23-35; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21; contrast Matt. 5:38-41.

that therefore the penalty could be met by a fine in money or goods.

Pharisees and Sadducees differed on many important if not fundamental matters of belief and practise, including the preexistence of spirits, the reality of a future state involving reward and punishment, the necessity for individual self-denial, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection from the dead ; in each of which the Pharisees stood for the affirmative while the Sadducees denied.^g Josephus avers—the doctrine of the Sadducees is that the soul and body perish together ; the law is all that they are concerned to observe.^h They were “a skeptical school of aristocratic traditionalists ; adhering only to the Mosaic law.”ⁱ

Among the many other sects and parties established on the ground of religious or political differences, or both, are the Essenes, the Nazarites, the Herodians and the Galileans. The Essenes were characterized by professions of ultra-piety ; they considered even the strictness of Pharisaic profession as weak and insufficient ; they guarded membership in their order by severe exactions extending through a first and a second novitiate ; they were forbidden even to touch food prepared by strangers ; they practised strict temperance and rigid self-denial, indulged in hard labor—preferably that of agriculture, and were forbidden to trade as merchants, to take part in war, or to own or employ slaves.^j Nazarites are not named in the New Testament, though of specific record in the earlier scriptures ;^k and from sources other than scriptural we learn of their existence at and after the time of Christ. The Nazarite was one of either sex who was bound to abstinence and sacrifice by a voluntary vow for special service to God ; the period of the vow might be limited or

^g Note 4, end of chapter.

^h Josephus, *Antiquities* xviii, 1:4.

ⁱ “New Stand. Dict.,” under “Sadducees.”

^j Josephus, *Antiquities* xviii, 1:5.

^k Numb. 6:2-21; Judges 13:5, 7; 16:17; Amos. 2:11, 12. Page 87.

for life. While the Essenes cultivated an ascetic brotherhood, the Nazarites were devoted to solitary discipline.

The Herodians constituted a politico-religious party who favored the plans of the Herods under the professed belief that through that dynasty alone could the status of the Jewish people be maintained and a reestablishment of the nation be secured. We find mention of the Herodians laying aside their partisan antipathies and acting in concert with the Pharisees in the effort to convict the Lord Jesus and bring Him to death.^l The Galileans or people of Galilee were distinguished from their fellow Israelites of Judea by greater simplicity and less ostentatious devotion in matters pertaining to the law. They were opposed to innovations, yet were generally more liberal or less bigoted than some of the professedly devout Judeans. They were prominent as able defenders in the wars of the people, and won for themselves a reputation for bravery and patriotism. They are mentioned in connection with certain tragical occurrences during our Lord's lifetime.^m

The authority of the priesthood was outwardly acknowledged by the Jews at the time of Christ; and the appointed order of service for priest and Levite was duly observed. During the reign of David, the descendants of Aaron, who were the hereditary priests in Israel, had been divided into twenty-four courses,ⁿ and to each course the labors of the sanctuary were allotted in turn. Representatives of but four of these courses returned from the captivity, but from these the orders were reconstructed on the original plan. In the days of Herod the Great the temple ceremonies were conducted with great display and outward elaborateness, as an essential matter of consistency with the splendor of the structure, which surpassed in magnificence all earlier sanctuaries.^o Priests and Levites, therefore, were in demand for

^l Matt. 22:15, 16; Mark 12:13.

^m Luke 13:1, 2; see also John 4:45; Mark 14:70; Acts 2:7.

ⁿ 1 Chron. 24:1-18.

^o Note 5, end of chapter.

continuous service, though the individuals were changed at short intervals according to the established system. In the regard of the people the priests were inferior to the rabbis, and the scholarly attainments of a scribe transcended in honor that pertaining to ordination in the priesthood. The religion of the time was a matter of ceremony and formality, of ritual and performance; it had lost the very spirit of worship, and the true conception of the relationship between Israel and Israel's God was but a dream of the past.

Such in brief were the principal features of the world's condition, and particularly as concerns the Jewish people, when Jesus the Christ was born in the meridian of time.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6.

I. The Sanhedrin.—This, the chief court or high council of the Jews, derives its name from the Greek *sunedrion*, signifying "a council." In English it is sometimes though inaccurately written "Sanhedrim." The Talmud traces the origin of this body to the calling of the seventy elders whom Moses associated with himself, making seventy-one in all, to administer as judges in Israel (Numb. 11:16, 17). The Sanhedrin in the time of Christ, as also long before, comprised seventy-one members, including the high-priest who presided in the assembly. It appears to have been known in its earlier period as the Senate, and was occasionally so designated even after Christ's death, (Josephus, *Antiquities* xii, 3:3; compare Acts 5:21); the name "Sanhedrin" came into general use during the reign of Herod the Great; but the term is not of Biblical usage; its equivalent in the New Testament is "council" (Matt. 5:22; 10:17; 26:59) though it must be remembered that the same term is applied to courts of lesser jurisdiction than that of the Sanhedrin, and to local tribunals. (Matt. 5:22; 10:17; 26:59; Mark 13:9; see also Acts 25:12.)

The following, from the *Standard Bible Dictionary*, is instructive: "Those qualified to be members were in general of the priestly house and especially of the Sadducean nobility. But from the days of Queen Alexandra (69-68 B. C.) onward, there were with these chief priests also many Pharisees in it under the name of scribes and elders. These three classes are found combined in Matt. 27:41; Mark 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1. How such members were appointed is not entirely clear. The aristocratic character of the body and the history of its origin forbid the belief that it was by election. Its nucleus probably consisted of the members of certain ancient families, to which, however, from time to time others were added by the secular rulers. The presiding officer was the high priest, who at first exercised in it

more than the authority of a member, claiming a voice equal to that of the rest of the body. But after the reduction of the high priesthood from a hereditary office to one bestowed by the political ruler according to his pleasure, and the frequent changes in the office introduced by the new system, the high priest naturally lost his prestige. Instead of holding in his hands the 'government of the nation,' he came to be but one of many to share this power; those who had served as high priests being still in esteem among their nation, and having lost their office not for any reason that could be considered valid by the religious sense of the community, exerted a large influence over the decisions of the assembly. In the New Testament they are regarded as the rulers (Matt. 26:59; 27:41; Acts 4:5, 8; Luke 23:13, 35; John 7:26), and Josephus' testimony supports this view. The functions of the Sanhedrin were religious and moral, and also political. In the latter capacity they further exercised administrative as well as judicial functions. As a religious tribunal, the Sanhedrin wielded a potent influence over the whole of the Jewish world (Acts 9:2); but as a court of justice, after the division of the country upon the death of Herod, its jurisdiction was limited to Judea. Here, however, its power was absolute even to the passing of sentence of death (Josephus, *Ant.* xiv, 9:3, 4; Matt. 26:3; Acts 4:5; 6:12; 22:30), although it had no authority to carry the sentence into execution except as approved and ordered by the representative of the Roman government. The law by which the Sanhedrin governed was naturally the Jewish, and in the execution of it this tribunal had a police of its own, and made arrests at its discretion (Matt. 26:47). . . .

While the general authority of the Sanhedrin extended over the whole of Judea, the towns in the country had local councils of their own (Matt. 5:22; 10:17; Mark 13:9; Josephus, *B. J.* ii, 14:1), for the administration of local affairs. These were constituted of elders (Luke 7:3), at least seven in number, (Josephus, *Ant.* iv, 8:14; *B. J.* ii, 20:5), and in some of the largest towns as many as twenty-three. What the relation of these to the central council in Jerusalem was does not appear clearly. Some sort of mutual recognition existed among them; for whenever the judges of the local court could not agree it seems that they were in the habit of referring their cases to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. (Josephus, *Ant.* iv, 8:14; *Mishna, Sanh.* 11:2)."

2. **Talmud.**—"The body of Jewish civil and religious law (and discussion directly or remotely relating thereto) not comprised in the Pentateuch, commonly including the *Mishna* and the *Gemara*, but sometimes limited to the latter; written in Aramaic. It exists in two great collections, the *Palestinian Talmud*, or *Talmud of the Land of Israel*, or *Talmud of the West*, or, more popularly, *Jerusalem Talmud*, embodying the discussions on the *Mishna* of the Palestinian doctors from the 2d to the middle of the 5th century; and the *Babylonian*, embodying those of the Jewish doctors in Babylonia, from about 190 to the 7th century."—*New Standard Dict.* The *Mishna* comprises the earlier portions of the *Talmud*; the *Gemara* is made up of later writings and is

largely an exposition of the Mishna. An edition of the Babylonian Talmud alone (issued at Vienna in 1682) comprised twenty-four tomes. (Geikie.)

3. Rabbis.—The title Rabbi is equivalent to our distinctive appellations Doctor, Master, or Teacher. By derivation it means Master or my Master, thus connoting dignity and rank associated with politeness of address. A definite explanation of the term is given by John (1:38), and the same meaning attaches by implication to its use as recorded by Matthew (23:8). It was applied as a title of respect to Jesus on several occasions (Matt. 23:7, 8; 26:25, 49; Mark 9:5; 11:21; 14:45; John 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; 4:31; 6:25; 9:2; 11:8). The title was of comparatively recent usage in the time of Christ, as it appears to have first come into general use during the reign of Herod the Great, though the earlier teachers, of the class without the name of Rabbis, were generally reverenced, and the title was carried back to them by later usage. Rab was an inferior title and Rabban a superior one to Rabbi. Rabboni was expressive of most profound respect, love and honor (see John 20:16). At the time of our Lord's ministry the Rabbis were held in high esteem, and rejoiced in the afflations of precedence and honor among men. They were almost exclusively of the powerful Pharisaic party.

The following is from Geikie's *Life and Words of Christ*, vol. I, chap. 6: "If the most important figures in the society of Christ's day were the Pharisees, it was because they were the Rabbis or teachers of the Law. As such they received superstitious honor, which was, indeed, the great motive, with many, to court the title or join the party. The Rabbis were classed with Moses, the patriarchs, and the prophets, and claimed equal reverence. Jacob and Joseph were both said to have been Rabbis. The Targum of Jonathan substitutes Rabbis, or Scribes, for the word 'prophets' where it occurs. Josephus speaks of the prophets of Saul's day as Rabbis. In the Jerusalem Targum all the patriarchs are learned Rabbis. They were to be dearer to Israel than father or mother—because parents avail only in this world [as was then taught] but the Rabbi forever. They were set above kings, for is it not written 'Through me kings reign'? Their entrance into a house brought a blessing; to live or to eat with them was the highest good fortune. . . . The Rabbis went even further than this in exalting their order. The Mishna declares that it is a greater crime to speak anything to their discredit, than to speak against the words of the Law. . . . Yet in form, the Law received boundless honor. Every saying of the Rabbis had to be based on some words of it, which were, however, explained in their own way. The spirit of the times, the wild fanaticism of the people, and their own bias, tended alike to make them set value only on ceremonies and worthless externalisms, to the utter neglect of the spirit of the sacred writings. Still it was held that the Law needed no confirmation, while the words of the Rabbis did. So far as the Roman authority under which they lived left them free, the Jews willingly put all power in the hands of the Rabbis. They or their nominees filled every office, from the

highest in the priesthood to the lowest in the community. They were the casuists, the teachers, the priests, the judges, the magistrates, and the physicians of the nation. The central and dominant characteristic of the teaching of the Rabbis was the certain advent of a great national Deliverer—the Messiah or Anointed of God or in the Greek translation of the title, the Christ. In no other nation than the Jews has such a conception ever taken such root or shown such vitality. It was agreed among the Rabbis that His birthplace must be Bethlehem, and that He must rise from the tribe of Judah."

Individual rabbis gathered disciples about them, and, inevitably, rivalry became manifest. Rabbinical schools and academies were established, each depending for its popularity on the greatness of some rabbi. The most famous of these institutions in the time of Herod I. were the school of Hillel and that of his rival Shammai. Later, tradition invested these with the title "the fathers of old." It appears from the trifling matters over which the followers of these two disagreed, that only by opposition could either maintain a distinguishing status. Hillel is reputed as the grandfather of Gamaliel, the rabbi and doctor of the law at whose feet Saul of Tarsus, afterward Paul the apostle, received his early instruction (Acts 22:3). So far as we have historic record of the views, principles or beliefs advocated by the rival schools of Hillel and Shammai, it appears that the former stood for a greater degree of liberality and tolerance, while the later emphasized a strict and possibly narrow interpretation of the law and its associated traditions. The dependence of the rabbinical schools on the authority of tradition is illustrated by an incident of record to the effect that even the prestige of the great Hillel did not insure him against uproar when once he spoke without citing precedent; only when he added that so had his masters Abtalion and Shemajah spoken did the tumult subside.

4. Sadducean Denial of the Resurrection.—As set forth in the text, the Sadducees formed an association numerically small as compared with the more popular and influential Pharisees. In the Gospels the Pharisees are of frequent mention, and very commonly in connection with the scribes, while the Sadducees are less frequently named. In the Acts of the Apostles, the Sadducees appear frequently as opponents of the Church. This condition was doubtless due to the prominence given the resurrection from the dead among the themes of the apostolic preaching, the Twelve continually bearing testimony to the actual resurrection of Christ. Sadducean doctrine denied the actuality and possibility of a bodily resurrection, the contention resting mainly on the ground that Moses, who was regarded as the supreme mortal lawgiver in Israel, and the chief mouthpiece of Jehovah, had written nothing concerning life after death. The following is taken from Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Sadducees," as touching this matter: "The denial of man's resurrection after death followed in the conception of the Sadducees as a logical conclusion from their denial that Moses had revealed to the Israelites the Oral Law. For on a point se

momentous as a second life beyond the grave, no religious party among the Jews would have deemed themselves bound to accept any doctrine as an article of faith, unless it had been proclaimed by Moses, their great legislator; and it is certain that in the written Law of the Pentateuch there is a total absence of any assertion by Moses of the resurrection of the dead. This fact is presented to Christians in a striking manner by the well-known words of the Pentateuch which are quoted by Christ in argument with the Sadducees on this subject (Exo. 3:6, 16; Mark 12:26, 27; Matt. 22:31, 32; Luke 20:37). It cannot be doubted that in such a case Christ would quote to His powerful adversaries the most cogent text in the Law; and yet the text actually quoted does not do more than suggest an inference on this great doctrine. It is true that passages in other parts of the Old Testament express a belief in the resurrection (Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2; Job 19:26; and in some of the Psalms); and it may at first sight be a subject of surprize that the Sadducees were not convinced by the authority of those passages. But although the Sadducees regarded the books which contained these passages as sacred, it is more than doubtful whether any of the Jews regarded them as sacred in precisely the same sense as the written Law. To the Jews Moses was and is a colossal form, preeminent in authority above all subsequent prophets."

5. The Temple of Herod.—“Herod’s purpose in the great undertaking [that of restoring the temple, and of enlarging it on a plan of unprecedented magnificence] was that of aggrandizing himself and the nation, rather than the rendering of homage to Jehovah. His proposition to rebuild or restore the temple on a scale of increased magnificence was regarded with suspicion and received with disfavor by the Jews, who feared that were the ancient edifice demolished, the arbitrary monarch might abandon his plan and the people would be left without a temple. To allay these fears the king proceeded to reconstruct and restore the old edifice, part by part, directing the work so that at no time was the temple service seriously interrupted. So little of the ancient structure was allowed to stand, however, that the temple of Herod must be regarded as a new creation. The work was begun about sixteen years before the birth of Christ; and while the Holy House itself was practically completed within a year and a half, this part of the labor having been performed by a body of one thousand priests specially trained for the purpose, the temple area was a scene of uninterrupted building operations down to the year 63 A. D. We read that in the time of Christ’s ministry the temple had been forty-six years in building; and at that time it was unfinished.

“The Biblical record gives us little information regarding this the last and the greatest of ancient temples; for what we know concerning it we are indebted mainly to Josephus, with some corroborative testimony found in the Talmud. In all essentials the Holy House, or Temple proper, was similar to the two earlier houses of sanctuary, though externally far more elaborate and imposing than either; but in the matter of surrounding courts and associated buildings, the Temple of Herod

preeminently excelled. . . . Yet its beauty and grandeur lay in architecture, excellence rather than in the sanctity of its worship or in the manifestation of the Divine Presence within its walls. Its ritual and service were largely man-prescribed; for while the letter of the Mosaic Law was professedly observed, the law had been supplemented and in many features supplanted by rule and priestly prescription. The Jews professed to consider it holy, and by them it was proclaimed as the House of the Lord. Devoid though it was of the divine accompaniments of earlier shrines accepted of God, and defiled as it was by priestly arrogance and usurpation, as also by the selfish interest of traffic and trade, it was nevertheless recognized even by our Lord the Christ as His Father's House. (Matt. 21:12; compare Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45.) . . . For thirty or more years after the death of Christ, the Jews continued the work of adding to and embellishing the temple buildings. The elaborate design conceived and projected by Herod had been practically completed; the temple was well-nigh finished, and, as soon afterward appeared, was ready for destruction. Its fate had been definitely foretold by the Savior Himself."—From the author's *House of the Lord*, pp. 54-61.

6. State of the World at the Time of the Savior's Birth.—At the beginning of the Christian era, the Jews, in common with most other nations, were subjects of the Roman empire. They were allowed a considerable degree of liberty in maintaining their religious observances and national customs generally, but their status was far from that of a free and independent people. The period was one of comparative peace—a time marked by fewer wars and less dissension than the empire had known for many years. These conditions were favorable for the mission of the Christ, and for the founding of His Church on earth. The religious systems extant at the time of Christ's earthly ministry may be classified in a general way as Jewish and Pagan, with a minor system—the Samaritan—which was essentially a mixture of the other two. The children of Israel alone proclaimed the existence of the true and living God; they alone looked forward to the advent of the Messiah, whom mistakenly they awaited as a prospective conqueror coming to crush the enemies of their nation. All other nations, tongues, and peoples, bowed to pagan deities, and their worship comprised nought but the sensual rites of heathen idolatry. Paganism was a religion of form and ceremony, based on polytheism—a belief in the existence of a multitude of gods, which deities were subject to all the vices and passions of humanity, while distinguished by immunity from death. Morality and virtue were unknown as elements of heathen service; and the dominant idea in pagan worship was that of propitiating the gods, in the hope of averting their anger and purchasing their favor.—See the author's *The Great Apostasy*, I:2-4, and notes following the chapter cited.

CHAPTER 7.

GABRIEL'S ANNUNCIATION OF JOHN AND OF JESUS.

JOHN THE FORERUNNER.

Associated with the prophecies of the birth of Christ are predictions concerning one who should precede Him, going before to prepare the way. It is not surprizing that the annunciation of the immediate advent of the forerunner was speedily followed by that of the Messiah; nor that the proclamations were made by the same heavenly ambassador—Gabriel, sent from the presence of God.^a

About fifteen months prior to the Savior's birth, Zacharias, a priest of the Aaronic order, was officiating in the functions of his office in the temple at Jerusalem. His wife, Elisabeth, was also of a priestly family, being numbered among the descendants of Aaron. The couple had never been blessed with children; and at the time of which we speak they were both well stricken in years and had sorrowfully given up hope of posterity. Zacharias belonged to the course of priests named after Abijah, and known in later time as the course of Abia. This was the eighth in the order of the twenty-four courses established by David the king, each course being appointed to serve in turn a week at the sanctuary.^b It will be remembered that on the return of the people from Babylon only four of the courses were represented; but of these four each averaged over fourteen hundred men.^c

During his week of service each priest was required to maintain scrupulously a state of ceremonial cleanliness of

^a Luke 1:19, 26; see also Dan. 8:16; 9:21-23.

^b Luke 1:5; compare 1 Chron. 24:10.

^c Ezra 2:36-39.

person; he had to abstain from wine, and from food except that specifically prescribed; he had to bathe frequently; he lived within the temple precincts and thus was cut off from family association; he was not allowed to come near the dead, nor to mourn in the formal manner if death should rob him of even his nearest and dearest of kin. We learn that the daily selection of the priest who should enter the Holy Place, and there burn incense on the golden altar, was determined by lot;^d and furthermore we gather, from non-scriptural history, that because of the great number of priests the honor of so officiating seldom fell twice to the same person.

On this day the lot had fallen to Zacharias. It was a very solemn occasion in the life of the humble Judean priest—this one day in his life on which the special and particularly sacred service was required of him. Within the Holy Place he was separated by the veil of the temple only from the Oracle or Holy of Holies—the inner sanctuary into which none but the high priest might enter, and he only on the Day of Atonement, after long ceremonial preparation.^e The place and the time were conducive to the highest and most reverential feelings. As Zacharias ministered within the Holy Place, the people without bowed themselves in prayer, watching for the clouds of incense smoke to appear above the great partition which formed the barrier between the place of general assembly and the Holy Place, and awaiting the reappearance of the priest and his pronouncement of the benediction.

Before the astonished gaze of Zacharias, at this supreme moment of his priestly service, there appeared, standing on the right of the golden altar of incense, an angel of the Lord. Many generations had passed in Jewry since any visible presence other than mortal had been manifest within the

^d Luke 1:8, 9; read the entire chapter.

^e Lev. chap. 16; Heb. 9:1-7; see also "House of the Lord," p. 59, and compare pp. 24 and 39. Note 6, end of chapter.

temple, either in the Holy Place or the Holy of Holies; the people regarded personal visitations of heavenly beings as occurrences of the past; they had come almost to believe that there were no longer prophets in Israel. Nevertheless, there was always a feeling of anxiety, akin to that of troubled expectancy, whenever a priest approached the inner sanctuary, which was regarded as the particular abode of Jehovah should He ever again condescend to visit His people. In view of these conditions we read without surprize that this angelic presence troubled Zacharias and caused fear to fall upon him. The words of the heavenly visitant, however, were comforting though of startling import, embodying as they did the unqualified assurance that the man's prayers had been heard, and that his wife should bear him a son, who must be named John.^f The promise went even further, specifying that the child to be born of Elisabeth would be a blessing to the people; many would rejoice at his birth; he would be great in the sight of the Lord, and must be guarded against wine and strong drink;^g he would be filled with the Holy Ghost, would be the means of turning many souls to God, and would go before to make ready a people prepared to receive the Messiah.

Doubtless Zacharias recognized in the predicted future of the yet unborn child, the great forerunner, of whom the prophets had told and the psalmist had sung; but that such a one should be offspring of himself and his aged wife seemed impossible despite the angel's promise. The man doubted, and asked whereby he should know that what his visitant had spoken was true: "And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able

^f Page 40. For other instances of children promised in spite of barrenness due to age or other causes, see Isaac (Gen. 17:16, 17 and 21:1-3); Samson, (Judges, chap. 13); Samuel (1 Sam. chap 1); son of the Shunammite (2 Kings 4:14-17).

^g Note 1, end of chapter.

to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.”^h When the highly blessed though sorely smitten priest at length came from within and appeared before the expectant congregation, already made anxious by his delayed return, he could but mutely dismiss the assembly and by signs indicate that he had seen a vision. The penalty for doubt was already operative; Zacharias was dumb.

In due time the child was born, there in the hill country of Judeaⁱ where Zacharias and Elisabeth had their home; and, on the eighth day following the birth the family assembled in accordance with custom and Mosaic requirement, to name the babe in connection with the rite of circumcision.^j All suggestions that he be called after his father were overruled by Zacharias, who wrote with decisive finality: “His name is John.” Thereupon the dumb^k priest’s tongue was loosed, and being filled with the Holy Ghost he burst forth in prophecy, praise and song; his inspired utterances have been set to music and are sung in worship by many Christian congregations as the *Benedictus*:

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his

^h Luke 1:19, 20.

ⁱ Luke 1:57; compare verse 39.

^j Note 2, end of chapter.

^k Note 3, end of chapter.

people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."^l

The last words Zacharias had uttered prior to the infliction of dumbness were words of doubt and unbelief, words in which he had called for a sign as proof of authority of one who came from the presence of the Almighty; the words with which he broke his long silence were words of praise unto God in whom he had all assurance, words that were as a sign to all who heard, and the fame whereof spread throughout the region.

The unusual circumstances attending the birth of John, notably the months of dumbness passed by the father and his sudden recovery of speech on the bestowal of the fore-appointed name, caused many to marvel and some to fear, as they asked: "What manner of child shall this be?" When, a man grown, John raised his voice in the wilderness, again in fulfilment of prophecy, the people questioned as to whether he was not the Messiah.^m Of his life between infancy and the beginning of his public ministry, a period of approximately thirty years, we have of record but a single sentence: "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."ⁿ

THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE VIRGIN.

Six months after the visitation of Gabriel to Zacharias, and three months prior to the birth of John, the same heavenly messenger was sent to a young woman named Mary, who lived at Nazareth, a town in Galilee. She was of the lineage of David; and though unmarried was betrothed

^l Luke 1:68-79.

^m Luke 1:65, 66; see also 3:15.

ⁿ Luke 1:80.

or espoused to a man named Joseph, who also was of royal descent through the Davidic line. The angel's salutation, while full of honor and blessing, caused Mary to wonder and to feel troubled. "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women";^o thus did Gabriel greet the virgin.

In common with other daughters of Israel, specifically those of the tribe of Judah and of known descent from David, Mary had doubtless contemplated, with holy joy and ecstasy, the coming of the Messiah through the royal line; she knew that some Jewish maiden was yet to become the mother of the Christ. Was it possible that the angel's words to her had reference to this supreme expectation and hope of the nation? She had little time to turn these things in her mind, for the angel continued: "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."^p

Even yet she comprehended but in part the import of this momentous visitation. Not in the spirit of doubt such as had prompted Zacharias to ask for a sign, but through an earnest desire for information and explanation, Mary, conscious of her unmarried status and sure of her virgin condition, asked: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" The answer to her natural and simple inquiry was the announcement of a miracle such as the world had never known—not a miracle in the sense of a happening contrary to nature's law, nevertheless a miracle through the operation of higher law, such as the human mind ordinarily fails to comprehend or regard as possible. Mary was informed that

^o Luke 1:28.

^p Luke 1:30-33.

she would conceive and in time bring forth a Son, of whom no mortal man would be the father:—"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."^q

Then the angel told her of the blessed condition of her cousin Elisabeth, who had been barren; and by way of sufficient and final explanation added: "For with God nothing shall be impossible." With gentle submissiveness and humble acceptance, the pure young virgin replied: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

His message delivered, Gabriel departed, leaving the chosen Virgin of Nazareth to ponder over her wondrous experience. Mary's promised Son was to be "The Only Begotten" of the Father in the flesh; so it had been both positively and abundantly predicted. True, the event was unprecedented; true also it has never been paralleled; but that the virgin birth would be unique was as truly essential to the fulfilment of prophecy as that it should occur at all. That Child to be born of Mary was begotten of Elohim, the Eternal Father, not in violation of natural law but in accordance with a higher manifestation thereof; and, the offspring from that association of supreme sanctity, celestial Sireship, and pure though mortal maternity, was of right to be called the "Son of the Highest." In His nature would be combined the powers of Godhood with the capacity and possibilities of mortality; and this through the ordinary operation of the fundamental law of heredity, declared of God, demonstrated by science, and admitted by philosophy, that living beings shall propagate—after their kind. The Child Jesus was to inherit the physical, mental, and spiritual traits, tendencies, and powers that characterized His parents—one immortal and glorified—God, the other human—woman.

^q Luke 1:35; see also preceding verses, 31-33.

Jesus Christ was to be born of mortal woman, but was not directly the offspring of mortal man, except so far as His mother was the daughter of both man and woman. In our Lord alone has been fulfilled the word of God spoken in relation to the fall of Adam, that the *seed of the woman* should have power to overcome Satan by bruising the serpent's head.^r

In respect to place, condition, and general environment, Gabriel's annunciation to Zacharias offers strong contrast to the delivery of his message to Mary. The prospective forerunner of the Lord was announced to his father within the magnificent temple, and in a place the most exclusively sacred save one other in the Holy House, under the light shed from the golden candlestick, and further illumined by the glow of living coals on the altar of gold; the Messiah was announced to His mother in a small town far from the capital and the temple, most probably within the walls of a simple Galilean cottage.

MARY'S VISIT TO HER COUSIN ELISABETH.

It was natural that Mary, left now to herself with a secret in her soul, holier, greater, and more thrilling than any ever borne before or since, should seek companionship, and that of some one of her own sex, in whom she could confide, from whom she might hope to derive comfort and support, and to whom it would be not wrong to tell what at that time was probably known to no mortal save herself. Her heavenly visitant had indeed suggested all this in his mention of Elisabeth, Mary's cousin, herself a subject of unusual blessing, and a woman through whom another miracle of God had been wrought. Mary set out with haste from Nazareth for the hill country of Judea, on a journey of about a hundred miles if the traditional account be true that the little town of Juttah was the home of Zacharias. There was

^r Page 43: and Gen. 3:15.

mutual joy in the meeting between Mary the youthful virgin, and Elisabeth, already well advanced in life. From what of Gabriel's words her husband had communicated, Elisabeth must have known that the approaching birth of her son would soon be followed by that of the Messiah, and that therefore the day for which Israel had waited and prayed through the long dark centuries was about to dawn. When Mary's salutation fell upon her ears, the Holy Ghost bore witness that the chosen mother of the Lord stood before her in the person of her cousin; and as she experienced the physical thrill incident to the quickening spirit of her own blessed conception, she returned the greeting of her visitor with reverence: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"^s Mary responded with that glorious hymn of praise, since adopted in the musical ritual of churches as the Magnificat:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."^t

MARY AND JOSEPH.

The visit lasted about three months, after which time Mary returned to Nazareth. The real embarrassment of her position she had now to meet. At the home of her cousin

^s Luke 1:42; read verses 39-56.

^t Luke 1:46-55.

she had been understood; her condition had served to confirm the testimony of Zacharias and Elisabeth; but how would her word be received at her own home? And especially, how would she be regarded by her espoused husband?"^u Betrothal, or espousal, in that time was in some respects as binding as the marriage vow, and could only be set aside by a ceremonial separation akin to divorce; yet an espousal was but an engagement to marry, not a marriage. When Joseph greeted his promised bride after her three months' absence, he was greatly distressed over the indications of her prospective maternity. Now the Jewish law provided for the annulment of a betrothal in either of two ways—by public trial and judgment, or by private agreement attested by a written document signed in the presence of witnesses. Joseph was a just man, a strict observer of the law, yet no harsh extremist; moreover he loved Mary and would save her all unnecessary humiliation, whatever might be his own sorrow and suffering. For Mary's sake he dreaded the thought of publicity; and therefore determined to have the espousal annulled with such privacy as the law allowed. He was troubled and thought much of his duty in the matter, when, "behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."^v

Great was Joseph's relief of mind; and great his joy in the realization that the long predicted coming of the Messiah was at hand; the words of the prophets would be fulfilled; a virgin, and she the one in the world most dear to him, had conceived, and in due time would bring forth that blessed Son, Emmanuel, which name by interpretation means "God

^u Note 4, end of chapter.

^v Matt. 1:20, 21; read 18-25.

with us."^w The angel's salutation was significant; "Joseph, thou son of David," was the form of address; and the use of that royal title must have meant to Joseph that, though he was of kingly lineage, marriage with Mary would cast no shadow upon his family status. Joseph waited not; to insure Mary all possible protection and establish his full legal right as her lawful guardian he hastened the solemnization of the marriage, and "did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."^x

The national hope of a Messiah based on promise and prophecy had become confused in the Jewish mind, through the influence of rabbinism with its many vagaries, and its "private interpretation"^y made to appear authoritative by the artificially sustained prestige of the expositors; yet certain conditions had been emphasized as essential, even by the rabbis, and by these essentials would be judged the claim of any Jew who might declare himself to be the long expected One. It was beyond question that the Messiah was to be born within the tribe of Judah and through the line of descent from David, and, being of David He must of necessity be of the lineage of Abraham, through whose posterity, according to the covenant, all nations of the earth were to be blessed.^z

Two genealogical records purporting to give the lineage of Jesus are found in the New Testament, one in the first chapter of Matthew, the other in the third chapter of Luke. These records present several apparent discrepancies, but such have been satisfactorily reconciled by the research of specialists in Jewish genealogy. No detailed analysis of the matter will be attempted here; but it should be borne in mind

^w Matt. 1:22-23; compare Isa. 7:14; see also 9:6.

^x Matt. 1:24, 25.

^y 2 Peter 1:20.

^z Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; compare Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8.

that the consensus of judgment on the part of investigators is that Matthew's account is that of the royal lineage, establishing the order of sequence among the legal successors to the throne of David, while the account given by Luke is a personal pedigree, demonstrating descent from David without adherence to the line of legal succession to the throne through primogeniture or nearness of kin.^a Luke's record is regarded by many, however, as the pedigree of Mary, while Matthew's is accepted as that of Joseph. The all important fact to be remembered is that the Child promised by Gabriel to Mary, the virginal bride of Joseph, would be born in the royal line. A personal genealogy of Joseph was essentially that of Mary also, for they were cousins. Joseph is named as son of Jacob by Matthew, and as son of Heli by Luke; but Jacob and Heli were brothers, and it appears that one of the two was the father of Joseph and the other the father of Mary and therefore father-in-law to Joseph. That Mary was of Davidic descent is plainly set forth in many scriptures; for since Jesus was to be born of Mary, yet was not begotten by Joseph, who was the reputed, and, according to the law of the Jews, the legal, father, the blood of David's posterity was given to the body of Jesus through Mary alone. Our Lord, though repeatedly addressed as Son of David, never repudiated the title but accepted it as rightly applied to Himself.^b Apostolic testimony stands in positive assertion of the royal heirship of Christ through earthly lineage, as witness the affirmation of Paul, the scholarly Pharisee: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;" and again: "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead."^c

In all the persecutions waged by His implacable haters,

^a Note 5, end of chapter.

^b For instances see Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 21:9; 20:30, 31, with which compare Luke 18:38, 39.

^c Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8; see also Acts 2:30; 13:23; compare Psa. 132:11; see also Luke 1:32.

in all the false accusations brought against Him, in the specific charges of sacrilege and blasphemy based on His acknowledgment of the Messiahship as His own, no mention is found of even an insinuation that He could not be the Christ through any ineligibility based on lineage. Genealogy was assiduously cared for by the Jews before, during, and after the time of Christ; indeed their national history was largely genealogical record; and any possibility of denying the Christ because of unattested descent would have been used to the fullest extent by insistent Pharisee, learned scribe, haughty rabbi, and aristocratic Sadducee.

At the time of the Savior's birth, Israel was ruled by alien monarchs. The rights of the royal Davidic family were unrecognized; and the ruler of the Jews was an appointee of Rome. Had Judah been a free and independent nation, ruled by her rightful sovereign, Joseph the carpenter would have been her crowned king; and his lawful successor to the throne would have been Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.

Gabriel's annunciation to Mary was that of the Son of David, on whose coming the hope of Israel rested as on a sure foundation. The One, thus announced, was Emmanuel, even God who was to dwell in flesh with His people,^d the Redeemer of the world, Jesus the Christ.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7.

1. John the Baptist Regarded as a Nazarite.—The instruction of the angel Gabriel to Zacharias, that the promised son, John, was to "drink neither wine nor strong drink," and the adult life of John as a dweller in the desert, together with his habit of wearing rough garb, have led commentators and Biblical specialists to assume that he was a "Nazarite for life." It is to be remembered, however, that nowhere in scripture extant is John the Baptist definitely called a Nazarite. A Nazarite, the name signifying *consecrated or separated*, was one, who by personal vow or by that made for him by his parents, was set apart to some special labor or course of life involving self denial. (See page 67). Smith's *Comp. Dict. of the Bible* says: "There is no

^d Matt. 1:23.

notice in the Pentateuch of Nazarites for life; but the regulations for the vow of a Nazarite of days are given (Numb. 6:1-2). The Nazarite, during the term of his consecration, was bound to abstain from wine, grapes, and every production of the vine, and from every kind of intoxicating drink. He was forbidden to cut the hair of his head, or to approach any dead body, even that of his nearest relation." The sole instance of a Nazarite for life named in the scriptures is that of Samson, whose mother was required to put herself under Nazarite observances prior to his birth, and the child was to be a Nazarite to God from his birth (Judges 13:3-7, 14). In the strictness of his life, John the Baptist is to be credited with all the personal discipline required of Nazarites whether he was under voluntary or parental vows or was not so bound.

2. **Circumcision**, while not exclusively a Hebrew or an Israelitish practise, was made a definite requirement through the revelations of God to Abraham, as the sign of the covenant between Jehovah and the patriarch. (Gen. 17:9-14.) This covenant was made to include the establishment of Abraham's posterity as a great nation, and provided that through his descendants should all nations of the earth be blessed (Gen. 22:18)—a promise which has been proved to mean that through that lineage should the Messiah be born. Circumcision was a binding condition; and its practise therefore became a national characteristic. Every male was to be circumcized eight days after birth (Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3). This requirement as to age came to be so rigidly enforced, that even if the eighth day fell on a Sabbath the rite had to be performed on that day (John 7:22, 23). All male slaves had to be circumcized (Gen. 17:12, 13) and even strangers who sojourned with the Hebrews and desired to partake of the Passover with them had to submit to the requirement (Exo. 12:48). From the *Standard Bible Dictionary* we take the following: "The ceremony indicated the casting off of uncleanness as a preparation for entrance into the privileges of membership in Israel. In the New Testament, with its transfer of emphasis from the external and formal to the inner and spiritual side of things, it was first declared unnecessary for Gentile converts to the gospel to be circumcized (Acts 15:28), and afterward the rite was set aside even by Jewish Christians." It became customary to name a child at the time it was circumcized, as is instanced in the case of John, son of Zacharias (Luke 1:59).

3. **Zacharias' Affliction**.—The sign for which Zacharias asked was thus given by the angel: "Behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." (Luke 1:20.) From the account of the circumcision and naming of the boy, John, it is held by some that the afflicted father was also deaf, as the company "made signs" to him as to how he would have his son named (verse 62).

4. **Jewish Betrothal**.—The vow of espousal, or betrothal, has always been regarded as sacred and binding in Jewish law. In a manner it was as binding as a marriage ceremony, though

it carried none of the particular rights of marriage. The following succinct statements are taken from Geikie's *Life and Words of Christ*, vol. I. p. 99: "Among the Jews of Mary's day it was even more of an actual engagement [than it later came to be]. The betrothal was formally made with rejoicings in the house of the bride under a tent or slight canopy raised for the purpose. It was called the 'making sacred' as the bride thenceforth was sacred to her husband in the strictest sense. To make it legal, the bridegroom gave his betrothed a piece of money, or the worth of it, before witnesses, with the words, 'Lo, thou art betrothed unto me,' or by a formal writing in which similar words and the maiden's name were given, and this in the same way was handed to her before witnesses."

5. Genealogies of Joseph and Mary.—"It is now almost certain that the genealogies in both Gospels are genealogies of Joseph, which if we may rely on early traditions of their consanguinity involve genealogies of Mary also. The Davidic descent of Mary is implied in Acts 2:30; 13:23; Rom. 1:3; Luke 1:32, etc. St. Matthew gives the legal descent of Joseph through the elder and regal line, as heir to the throne of David; St. Luke gives the natural descent. Thus, the real father of Salathiel was heir of the house of Nathan, but the childless Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30) was the last lineal representative of the elder kingly line. The omission of some obscure names and the symmetrical arrangement into tesseradecads were common Jewish customs. It is not too much to say that after the labors of Mill (*On the Mythical Interpretation of the Gospels*, pp. 147-217) and Lord A. C. Hervey (*On the Genealogies of Our Lord*, 1853) scarcely a single difficulty remains in reconciling the apparent divergencies. And thus in this as in so many other instances, the very discrepancies which appear to be most irreconcilable, and most fatal to the historic accuracy of the four evangelists, turn out, on closer and more patient investigation, to be fresh proofs that they are not only entirely independent, but also entirely trustworthy."—Farrar, *Life of Christ*, p. 27, note.

The writer of the article "Genealogy of Jesus Christ" in Smith's *Bible Dict.* says: "The New Testament gives us the genealogy of but one person, our Savior (Matt. 1; Luke 3). . . . The following propositions will explain the true construction of these genealogies (so Lord A. C. Hervey): 1. They are both the genealogies of Joseph, i.e. of Jesus Christ, as the reputed and legal son of Joseph and Mary. 2. The genealogy of Matthew is, as Grotius asserted, Joseph's genealogy as legal successor to the throne of David. That of Luke is Joseph's private genealogy, exhibiting his real birth, as David's son, and thus showing why he was heir to Solomon's crown. The simple principle that one evangelist exhibits that genealogy which contained the successive heirs to David's and Solomon's throne, while the other exhibits the paternal stem of him who was the heir, explains all the anomalies of the two pedigrees, their agreements as well as their discrepancies, and the circumstance of their being two at all. 3. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was prob-

ably the daughter of Jacob, and first cousin to Joseph her husband."

A valuable contribution to the literature of this subject appears in the *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain*, 1912, vol. 44, pp. 9-36, as an article, "The Genealogies of our Lord," by Mrs. A. S. Lewis, and discussion thereof by many scholars of acknowledged ability. The author, Mrs. Lewis, is an authority on Syriac manuscripts, and is one of the two women who, in 1892, discovered in the library of St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai, the Syriac palimpsest MS. of the four Gospels. The gifted author holds that Matthew's account attests the royal pedigree of Joseph, and that Luke's genealogical table proves the equally royal descent of Mary. Mrs. Lewis says: "The Sinai Palimpsest also tells us that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, to be enrolled there, because they were both of the house and lineage of David."

Canon Girdlestone, in discussing the article, says in pertinent emphasis of Mary's status as a princess of royal blood through descent from David: "When the angel was foretelling to Mary the birth of the Holy Child, he said, 'The Lord God shall give Him the throne of His father David.' Now if Joseph, her betrothed, had alone been descended from David, Mary would have answered, 'I am not yet married to Joseph,' whereas she did answer simply, 'I am an unmarried woman,' which plainly implies—if I were married, since I am descended from David, I could infuse my royal blood into a son, but how can I have a royal son while I am a virgin?"

After brief mention of the Jewish law relating to adoption, wherein it is provided (according to Hammurabi's Code, section 188), that if a man teach his adopted son a handicraft, the son is thereby confirmed in all the rights of heirship, Canon Girdlestone adds: "If the crown of David had been assigned to his successor in the days of Herod it would have been placed on the head of Joseph. And who would have been the legal successor to Joseph? Jesus of Nazareth would have been then the King of the Jews, and the title on the cross spoke the truth. God had raised Him up to the house of David."

6. The Inner Sanctuary of the Temple.—The Holy of Holies in the Temple of Herod retained the form and dimensions of the Oracle in the Temple of Solomon; it was therefore a cube, twenty cubits in each principal measurement. Between this and the Holy Place hung a double veil, of finest material, elaborately embroidered. The outer of the two veils was open at the north end, the inner at the south; so that the high priest who entered at the appointed time once a year could pass between the veils without exposing the Holy of Holies. The sacred chamber was empty save for a large stone upon which the high priest sprinkled the sacrificial blood on the Day of Atonement; this stone occupied the place of the Ark and its Mercy Seat. Outside the veil, in the Holy Place, stood the altar of incense, the seven-branched candlestick, and the table of shewbread.—*The House of the Lord*, p. 59.

CHAPTER 8.

THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Equally definite with the prophecies declaring that the Messiah would be born in the lineage of David are the predictions that fix the place of His birth at Bethlehem, a small town in Judea. There seems to have been no difference of opinion among priests, scribes, or rabbis on the matter, either before or since the great event. Bethlehem, though small and of little importance in trade or commerce, was doubly endeared to the Jewish heart as the birthplace of David and as that of the prospective Messiah. Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth of Galilee, far removed from Bethlehem of Judea ; and, at the time of which we speak, the maternity of the Virgin was fast approaching.

At that time a decree went out from Rome ordering a taxing of the people in all kingdoms and provinces tributary to the empire ; the call was of general scope, it provided "that all the world should be taxed."^a The taxing herein referred to may properly be understood as an enrolment,^b or a registration, whereby a census of Roman subjects would be secured, upon which as a basis the taxation of the different peoples would be determined. This particular census was the second of three such general registrations recorded by historians as occurring at intervals of about twenty years. Had the census been taken by the usual Roman method, each person would have been enrolled at the town of his residence ; but the Jewish custom, for which the Roman law had

^a Luke 2:1; see also verses 2-4. Note 1, end of chapter.

^b Note marginal reading, Oxford and Bagster Bibles.

respect, necessitated registration at the cities or towns claimed by the respective families as their ancestral homes. As to whether the requirement was strictly mandatory that every family should thus register at the city of its ancestors, we need not be specially concerned; certain it is that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, the city of David, to be inscribed under the imperial decree.^c

The little town was crowded at the time, most likely by the multitude that had come in obedience to the same summons; and, in consequence, Joseph and Mary failed to find the most desirable accommodations and had to be content with the conditions of an improvised camp, as travelers unnumbered had done before, and as uncounted others have done since, in that region and elsewhere. We cannot reasonably regard this circumstance as evidence of extreme destitution; doubtless it entailed inconvenience, but it gives us no assurance of great distress or suffering.^d It was while she was in this situation that Mary the Virgin gave birth to her firstborn, the Son of the Highest, the Only Begotten of the Eternal Father, Jesus the Christ.

But few details of attendant circumstances are furnished us. We are not told how soon the birth occurred after the arrival of Mary and her husband at Bethlehem. It may have been the purpose of the evangelist who made the record to touch upon matters of purely human interest as lightly as was consistent with the narration of fact, in order that the central truth might neither be hidden nor overshadowed by unimportant incident. We read in Holy Writ this only of the actual birth: "And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."^e

^c Note 1, end of chapter.

^d Note 2, end of chapter.

^e Luke 2:6, 7.

In vivid contrast with the simplicity and brevity of the scriptural account and of its paucity of incidental details, is the mass of circumstance supplied by the imagination of men, much of which is wholly unsupported by authoritative record and in many respects is plainly inconsistent and untrue. It is the part of prudence and wisdom to segregate and keep distinctly separate the authenticated statements of fact, in so momentous a matter, from the fanciful commentaries of historians, theologians, and writers of fiction, as also from the emotional rhapsodies of poets and artistic extravaganzas wrought by chisel or brush.

From the period of its beginning, Bethlehem had been the home of people engaged mostly in pastoral and agricultural pursuits. It is quite in line with what is known of the town and its environs to find at the season of Messiah's birth, which was in the springtime of the year, that flocks were in the field both night and day under the watchful care of their keepers. Unto certain of these humble shepherds came the first proclamation that the Savior had been born. Thus runs the simple record: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."^f

Tidings of such import had never before been delivered by angel or received by man—good tidings of great joy,

^f Luke 2:8-14.

given to but few and those among the humblest of earth, but destined to spread to all people. There is sublime grandeur in the scene, as there is divine authorship in the message, and the climax is such as the mind of man could never have conceived—the sudden appearance of a multitude of the heavenly host, singing audibly to human ears the briefest, most consistent and most truly complete of all the songs of peace ever attuned by mortal or spirit choir. What a consummation to be wished—Peace on earth! But how can such come except through the maintenance of good will toward men? And through what means could glory to God in the highest be more effectively rendered?

The trustful and unsophisticated keepers of sheep had not asked for sign or confirmation; their faith was in unison with the heavenly communication; nevertheless the angel had given them what he called a sign, to guide them in their search. They waited not, but went in haste, for in their hearts they believed, yea, more than believed, they knew, and this was the tenor of their resolve: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."^g They found the Babe in the manger, with the mother and Joseph near by; and, having seen, they went out and testified to the truth concerning the Child. They returned to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.

There is meaning as deep as the pathos that all must feel in the seemingly parenthetical remark by Luke. "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."^h It is apparent that the great truth as to the personality and mission of her divine Son had not yet unfolded itself in its fulness to her mind. The whole course of events, from the salutation of Gabriel to the reverent testimony of the shepherds concerning the announcing angel and the heavenly

^g Luke 2:15.

^h Luke 2:19.

hosts, was largely a mystery to that stainless mother and wife.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW STRICTLY OBSERVED.

The Child was born a Jew ; the mother was a Jewess, and the reputed and legal father, Joseph, was a Jew. The true paternity of the Child was known to but few, perhaps at that time to none save Mary, Joseph, and possibly Elisabeth and Zacharias ; as He grew He was regarded by the people as Joseph's son.ⁱ The requirements of the law were carried out with exactitude in all matters pertaining to the Child. When eight days old He was circumcized, as was required of every male born in Israel ;^j and at the same time He received as an earthly bestowal the name that had been prescribed at the annunciation. He was called JESUS, which, being interpreted is Savior ; the name was rightfully His for He came to save the people from their sins.^k

Part of the law given through Moses to the Israelites in the wilderness and continued in force down through the centuries, related to the procedure prescribed for women after childbirth.^l In compliance therewith, Mary remained in retirement forty days following the birth of her Son ; then she and her husband brought the Boy for presentation before the Lord as prescribed for the male firstborn of every family. It is manifestly impossible that all such presentations could have taken place in the temple, for many Jews lived at great distances from Jerusalem ; it was the rule, however, that parents should present their children in the temple when possible. Jesus was born within five or six miles from Jerusalem ; He was accordingly taken to the temple for the ceremonial of redemption from the requirement applying to the firstborn of all Israelites except Levites. It will be remembered that the children of Israel had been delivered from the

ⁱ Luke 2:22; Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3.

^j Gen. 17:12, 13; Lev. 12:3; compare John 7:22. Page 88.

^k Luke 2:21; compare 1:31; Matt. 1:21, 25.

^l Lev. chap. 12.

bondage of Egypt with the accompaniment of signs and wonders. Because of Pharaoh's repeated refusals to let the people go, plagues had been brought upon the Egyptians, one of which was the death of the firstborn throughout the land, excepting only the people of Israel. In remembrance of this manifestation of power, the Israelites were required to dedicate their firstborn sons to the service of the sanctuary.^m Subsequently the Lord directed that all males belonging to the tribe of Levi should be devoted to this special labor instead of the firstborn in every tribe; nevertheless the eldest son was still claimed as particularly the Lord's own, and had to be formally exempted from the earlier requirement of service by the paying of a ransom.ⁿ

In connection with the ceremony of purification, every mother was required to furnish a yearling lamb for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or dove for a sin offering; but in the case of any woman who was unable to provide a lamb, a pair of doves or pigeons might be offered. We learn of the humble circumstances of Joseph and Mary from the fact that they brought the less costly offering, two doves or pigeons, instead of one bird and a lamb.

Among the righteous and devout Israelites were some who, in spite of traditionalism, rabbinism, and priestly corruption, still lived in righteous expectation of inspired confidence, awaiting patiently the consolation of Israel.^o One of these was Simeon, then living in Jerusalem. Through the power of the Holy Ghost he had gained the promise that he should not see death until he had looked upon the Lord's Christ in the flesh. Prompted by the Spirit he repaired to the temple on the day of the presentation of Jesus, and recognized in the Babe the promised Messiah. In the moment of realization that the hope of his life had found glorious consummation, Simeon raised the Child reverently in his

^m Exo. 12:29; 13:2, 12; 22:29, 30.

ⁿ Numb. 8:15-18; 18:15, 16.

^o Luke 2:25; see also verse 38; Mark 15:43; compare Psa. 40:1.

arms, and, with the simple but undying eloquence that comes of God uttered this splendid supplication, in which thanksgiving, resignation and praise are so richly blended :

“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”^p

Then under the spirit of prophecy, Simeon told of the greatness of the Child’s mission, and of the anguish that the mother would be called to endure because of Him, which would be even like unto that of a sword piercing her soul. The Spirit’s witness to the divinity of Jesus was not to be confined to a man. There was at that time in the temple a godly woman of great age, Anna, a prophetess who devoted herself exclusively to temple service; and she, being inspired of God, recognized her Redeemer, and testified of Him to all about her. Both Joseph and Mary marveled at the things that were spoken of the Child; seemingly they were not yet able to comprehend the majesty of Him who had come to them through so miraculous a conception and so marvelous a birth.

WISE MEN SEARCH FOR THE KING.

Some time after the presentation of Jesus in the temple, though how long we are not told, possibly but a few days, possibly weeks or even months, Herod, king of Judea, was greatly troubled, as were the people of Jerusalem in general, over the report that a Child of Prophecy—one destined to become King of the Jews—had been born. Herod was professedly an adherent of the religion of Judah, though by birth an Idumean, by descent an Edomite or one of the posterity

^p Luke 2:29-32. These verses are known in Christian hymnology as the *Nunc Dimitiss*; the name has reference to the first two words of the Latin version.

of Esau, all of whom the Jews hated; and of all Edomites not one was more bitterly detested than was Herod the king. He was tyrannical and merciless, sparing neither foe nor friend who came under suspicion of being a possible hindrance to his ambitious designs. He had his wife and several of his sons, as well as others of his blood kindred, cruelly murdered; and he put to death nearly all of the great national council, the Sanhedrin. His reign was one of revolting cruelty and unbridled oppression. Only when in danger of inciting a national revolt or in fear of incurring the displeasure of his imperial master, the Roman emperor, did he stay his hand in any undertaking.^q

Rumors of the birth of Jesus reached Herod's ears in this way. There came to Jerusalem certain men from afar, wise men they were called, and they asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."^r Herod summoned "all the chief priests and scribes of the people," and demanded of them where, according to the prophets, Christ should be born. They answered him: "In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."^s

Herod sent secretly for the wise men, and inquired of them as to the source of their information, and particularly as to the time at which the star, to which they attached such significance, had appeared. Then he directed them to Bethlehem, saying: "Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." As the men set out from Jerusalem on the last stage of their journey of inquiry and search, they rejoiced exceedingly, for the new

^q Note 3, end of chapter.

^r Matt. 2:2; read 1-10.

^s Matt. 2:5, 6; compare Micah 5:2; John 7:42.

star they had seen in the east was again visible. 'They found the house wherein Mary was living with her husband and the Babe, and as they recognized the royal Child they "fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."^t Having thus gloriously accomplished the purpose of their pilgrimage, these devout and learned travelers prepared to return home, and would have stopped at Jerusalem to report to the king as he had requested, but "being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way."^u

Much has been written, beyond all possible warrant of scriptural authority, concerning the visit of the magi, or wise men, who thus sought and found the infant Christ. As a matter of fact, we are left without information as to their country, nation, or tribal relationship; we are not even told how many they were, though unauthenticated tradition has designated them as "the three wise men," and has even given them names; whereas they are left unnamed in the scriptures, the only true record of them extant, and may have numbered but two or many. Attempts have been made to identify the star whose appearance in their eastern sky had assured the magi that the King was born; but astronomy furnishes no satisfactory confirmation. The recorded appearance of the star has been associated by both ancient and modern interpreters with the prophecy of Balaam, who, though not an Israelite had blessed Israel, and under divine inspiration had predicted: "there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."^v Moreover, as already shown, the appearance of a new star was a predicted sign recognized and acknowledged among the people of the western world as witness of Messiah's birth.^w

^t Note 4, end of chapter.

^u Note 5, end of chapter.

^v Numb. 24:17.

^w B. of M., Helaman 14:5; 3 Nephi 1:21. Pp. 52, 101 and 721 herein.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

Herod's perfidy in directing the magi to return and report to him where the royal Infant was to be found, falsely professing that he wished to worship Him also, while in his heart he purposed taking the Child's life, was thwarted by the divine warning given to the wise men as already noted. Following their departure, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph, saying: "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."^x In obedience to this command, Joseph took Mary and her Child, and set out by night on the journey to Egypt; and there the family remained until divinely directed to return. When it was apparent to the king that the wise men had ignored his instructions, he was exceedingly angry; and, estimating the earliest time at which the birth could have occurred according to the magis' statement of the star's appearing, he ruthlessly ordered the slaughter of "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under."^y In this massacre of the innocents, the evangelist found a fulfilment of Jeremiah's fateful voicing of the word of the Lord, spoken six centuries earlier and expressed in the forceful past tense as though then already accomplished: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."^z

BIRTH OF JESUS MADE KNOWN TO THE NEPHITES.

As heretofore shown, the prophets of the western hemisphere had foretold in great plainness the earthly advent of the Lord, and had specifically set forth the time, place, and circumstances of His birth.^a As the time drew near the

^x Matt. 2:13.

^y Matt. 2:16.

^z Matt. 2:17, 18; compare Jer. 31:15.

^a Page 49.

people were divided by conflicting opinions concerning the reliability of these prophecies; and intolerant unbelievers cruelly persecuted those, who, like Zacharias, Simeon, Anna, and other righteous ones in Palestine, had maintained in faith and trust their unwavering expectation of the coming of the Lord. Samuel, a righteous Lamanite, who, because of his faithfulness and sacrificing devotion had been blessed with the spirit and power of prophecy, fearlessly proclaimed the birth of Christ as near: "And behold, he said unto them, Behold I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name."^b The prophet told of many signs and wonders, which were to mark the great event. As the five years ran their course, the believers grew more steadfast, the unbelievers more violent, until the last day of the specified period dawned; and this was the "day set apart by the unbelievers, that all those who believed in those traditions should be put to death, except the sign should come to pass which had been given by Samuel the prophet."^c

Nephi, a prophet of the time, cried unto the Lord in anguish of soul because of the persecution of which his people were the victims; "and behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, Lift up your head and be of good cheer, for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to shew unto the world that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets. Behold, I come unto my own, to fulfil all things which I have made known unto the children of men, from the foundation of the world, and do the will, both of the Father, and of the Son; of the Father, because of me, and of the Son, because of my flesh. And behold, the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given."^d

^b B. of M., Helaman 14:2; read 1-9.

^c B. of M., 3 Nephi 1:9; read verses 4-21.

^d B. of M., 3 Nephi 1:12-21.

The words of the prophet were fulfilled that night; for though the sun set in its usual course there was no darkness; and on the morrow the sun rose on a land already illumined; a day and a night and another day had been as one day; and this was but one of the signs. A new star appeared in the firmament of the west, even as was seen by the magi in the east; and there were many other marvelous manifestations as the prophets had predicted. All these things occurred on what is now known as the American continent, six hundred years after Lehi and his little company had left Jerusalem to come hither.

THE TIME OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

The time of Messiah's birth is a subject upon which specialists in theology and history, and those who are designated in literature "the learned," fail to agree. Numerous lines of investigation have been followed, only to reach divergent conclusions, both as to the year and as to the month and day within the year at which the "Christian era" in reality began. The establishment of the birth of Christ as an event marking a time from which chronological data should be calculated, was first effected about 532 A. D. by Dionysius Exiguus; and as a basis for the reckoning of time this method has come to be known as the Dionysian system, and takes for its fundamental datum A. U. C. 753, that is to say 753 years after the founding of Rome, as the year of our Lord's birth. So far as there exists any consensus of opinion among later scholars who have investigated the subject, it is to the effect that the Dionysian calculation is wrong, in that it places the birth of Christ between three and four years too late; and that therefore our Lord was born in the third or fourth year before the beginning of what is designated by the scholars of Oxford and Cambridge, "the Common Account called Anno Domini."^e

^e Marginal reading, Oxford and Bagster Bibles, Matt. 2:1.

Without attempting to analyze the mass of calculation data relating to this subject, we accept the Dionysian basis as correct with respect to the year, which is to say that we believe Christ to have been born in the year known to us as B. C. 1, and, as shall be shown, in an early month of that year. In support of this belief we cite the inspired record known as the "Revelation on Church Government, given through Joseph the Prophet, in April, 1830," which opens with these words: "The rise of the Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the flesh."^f

Another evidence of the correctness of our commonly accepted chronology is furnished by the Book of Mormon record. Therein we read that "in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah," the word of the Lord came to Lehi at Jerusalem, directing him to take his family and depart into the wilderness.^g In the early stages of their journey toward the sea, Lehi prophesied, as had been shown him of the Lord, concerning the impending destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews. Furthermore, he predicted the eventual return of the people of Judah from their exile in Babylon, and the birth of the Messiah, which latter event he definitely declared would take place six hundred years from the time he and his people had left Jerusalem.^h This specification of time was repeated by later prophecy;ⁱ and the signs of the actual fulfilment are recorded as having been realized "six hundred years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem."^j These scriptures fix the time of the beginning of Zedekiah's reign as six hundred years before the birth of Christ. According to the commonly accepted reckoning, Zedekiah was made king in the

^f Doc. and Cov. 20:1; compare 21:3. Note 6, end of chapter.

^g B. of M., 1 Nephi 1:4; 2:2-4.

^h B. of M., 1 Nephi 10:4.

ⁱ B. of M., 1 Nephi 19:8; 2 Nephi 25:19.

^j B. of M., 3 Nephi 1:1.

year 597 B. C.^k This shows a discrepancy of about three years between the commonly accepted date of Zedekiah's inauguration as king and that given in the Book of Mormon statement; and, as already seen, there is a difference of between three and four years between the Dionysian reckoning and the nearest approach to an agreement among scholars concerning the beginning of the current era. Book of Mormon chronology therefore sustains in general the correctness of the common or Dionysian system.

As to the season of the year in which Christ was born, there is among the learned as great a diversity of opinion as that relating to the year itself. It is claimed by many Biblical scholars that December 25th, the day celebrated in Christendom as Christmas, cannot be the correct date. We believe April 6th to be the birthday of Jesus Christ as indicated in a revelation of the present dispensation already cited,^l in which that day is made without qualification the completion of the one thousand eight hundred and thirtieth year since the coming of the Lord in the flesh. This acceptance is admittedly based on faith in modern revelation, and in no wise is set forth as the result of chronological research or analysis. We believe that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, April 6, B. C. 1.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8.

1. The "Taxing."—Regarding the presence of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem, far from their Galilean home, and the imperial decree by compliance with which they were led there, the following notes are worthy of consideration. Farrar (*Life of Christ*, p. 24, note), says: "It appears to be uncertain whether the journey of Mary with her husband was obligatory or voluntary. . . . Women were liable to a capitation tax, if this enrolment also involved taxation. But, apart from any legal necessity, it may easily be imagined that at such a moment Mary would desire not to be left alone. The cruel suspicion of which she had been the subject, and which had almost led to the breaking off of her betrothal (Matt. 1:19) would make her cling all the more to the protection of her husband." The fol-

^k "Standard Bible Dictionary," edited by Jacobus, Nourse, and Zenos, pub. by Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York and London, 1909, p. 915, article "Zedekiah."

^l *Doc. and Cov.* 20:1; compare 21:2

lowing excerpt is from Geikie's *Life and Words of Christ*, vol. 1, chap. 9; p. 108: "The Jewish nation had paid tribute to Rome, through their rulers, since the days of Pompey; and the methodical Augustus, who now reigned, and had to restore order and soundness to the finances of the empire, after the confusion and exhaustion of the civil wars, took good care that this obligation should neither be forgotten nor evaded. He was accustomed to require a census to be taken periodically in every province of his vast dominions, that he might know the number of soldiers he could levy in each, and the amount of taxes due to the treasury.

. . . . In an empire embracing the then known world, such a census could hardly have been made simultaneously, or in any short or fixed time; more probably it was the work of years, in successive provinces or kingdoms. Sooner or later, however, even the dominions of vassal kings like Herod had to furnish the statistics demanded by their master. He had received his kingdom on the footing of a subject, and grew more entirely dependent on Augustus as years passed, asking his sanction at every turn for steps he proposed to take. He would, thus, be only too ready to meet his wish, by obtaining the statistics he sought, as may be judged from the fact that in one of the last years of his life, just before Christ's birth, he made the whole Jewish nation take a solemn oath of allegiance to the emperor as well as to himself.

"It is quite probable that the mode of taking the required statistics was left very much to Herod, at once to show respect to him before his people, and from the known opposition of the Jews to anything like a general enumeration, even apart from the taxation to which it was designed to lead. At the time to which the narrative refers, a simple registration seems to have been made, on the old Hebrew plan of enrolling by families in their ancestral districts, of course for future use; and thus it passed over quietly. . . . The proclamation having been made through the land, Joseph had no choice but to go to Bethlehem, the city of David, the place in which his family descent, from the house and lineage of David, required him to be inscribed."

2. Jesus Born Amidst Poor Surroundings.—Undoubtedly the accommodations for physical comfort amidst which Jesus was born were few and poor. But the environment, considered in the light of the customs of the country and time, was far from the state of abject deprivation which modern and western ways would make it appear. "Camping out" was no unusual exigency among travelers in Palestine at the time of our Lord's birth; nor is it considered such to-day. It is, however, beyond question that Jesus was born into a comparatively poor family, amidst humble surroundings associated with the inconveniences incident to travel. Cunningham Geikie, *Life and Words of Christ*, chap. 9, pp. 112, 113, says: "It was to Bethlehem that Joseph and Mary were coming, the town of Ruth and Boaz, and the early home of their own great forefather David. As they approached it from Jerusalem they would pass, at the last mile, a spot sacred to Jewish memory, where the light of Jacob's life

went out, when his first love, Rachel, died, and was buried, as her tomb still shows, 'in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.' . . . Traveling in the East has always been very different from Western ideas. As in all thinly-settled countries, private hospitality, in early times, supplied the want of inns, but it was the peculiarity of the East that this friendly custom continued through a long series of ages. On the great roads through barren or uninhabited parts, the need of shelter led, very early, to the erection of rude and simple buildings, of varying size, known as khans, which offered the wayfarer the protection of walls and a roof, and water, but little more. The smaller structures consisted of sometimes only a single empty room, on the floor of which the traveler might spread his carpet for sleep; the larger ones, always built in a hollow square, enclosing a court for the beasts, with water in it for them and their masters. From immemorial antiquity it has been a favorite mode of benevolence to raise such places of shelter, as we see so far back as the times of David, when Chimham built a great khan near Bethlehem, on the caravan road to Egypt."

Canon Farrar (*Life of Christ*, chap. 1) accepts the traditional belief that the shelter within which Jesus was born was that of one of the numerous limestone caves which abound in the region, and which are still used by travelers as resting places. He says: "In Palestine it not infrequently happens that the entire khan, or at any rate the portion of it in which the animals are housed, is one of those innumerable caves which abound in the limestone rocks of its central hills. Such seems to have been in the case at the little town of Bethlehem-Ephratah, in the land of Judah. Justin Martyr, the Apologist, who, from his birth at Shechem, was familiar with Palestine, and who lived less than a century after the time of our Lord, places the scene of the nativity in a cave. This is, indeed, the ancient and constant tradition both of the Eastern and the Western Churches, and it is one of the few to which, though unrecorded in the Gospel history, we may attach a reasonable probability."

3. Herod the Great.—The history of Herod I, otherwise known as Herod the Great, must be sought in special works, in which the subject is treated at length. Some of the principal facts should be considered in our present study, and for the assistance of the student a few extracts from works regarded as reliable are presented herewith.

Condensed from part of article in the *Standard Bible Dictionary*, edited by Jacobus, Nourse, and Zenos; published by Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1909:—Herod I, the son of Antipater, was early given office by his father, who had been made procurator of Judea. The first office which Herod held was that of governor of Galilee. He was then a young man of about twenty-five, energetic and athletic. Immediately he set about the eradication of the robber bands that infested his district, and soon was able to execute the robber chief Hezekiah and several of his followers. For this he was summoned to Jerusalem by the Sanhedrin, tried and condemned, but with the connivance of

Hyrcanus II [the high priest and ethnarch] he escaped by night.—He went to Rome where he was appointed King of Judea by Antony and Octavius.—For the next two years he was engaged in fighting the forces of Antigonus, whom he finally defeated, and in 37 B. C. gained possession of Jerusalem.—As king, Herod confronted serious difficulties. The Jews objected to him because of his birth and reputation. The Asmonean family regarded him as a usurper, notwithstanding the fact that he had married Mariamne. The Pharisees were shocked at his Hellenistic sympathies, as well as at his severe methods of government. On the other hand the Romans held him responsible for the order of his kingdom, and the protection of the eastern frontier of the Republic. Herod met these various difficulties with characteristic energy and even cruelty, and generally with cold sagacity. Although he taxed the people severely, in times of famine he remitted their dues and even sold his plate to get means to buy them food. While he never became actually friendly with the Pharisees, they profited by his hostility to the party of the Asmoneans, which led at the beginning of his reign to the execution of a number of Sadducees who were members of the Sanhedrin.

From Smith's *Comprehensive Dictionary of the Bible*: The latter part "of the reign of Herod was undisturbed by external troubles, but his domestic life was embittered by an almost uninterrupted series of injuries and cruel acts of vengeance. The terrible acts of bloodshed which Herod perpetrated in his own family were accompanied by others among his subjects equally terrible, from the number who fell victims to them. According to the well-known story, he ordered the nobles whom he had called to him in his last moments to be executed immediately after his decease, that so at least his death might be attended by universal mourning. It was at the time of his fatal illness that he must have caused the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem" (Matt. 2:16-18).

The mortal end of the tyrant and multi-murderer is thus treated by Farrar in his *Life of Christ*, pp. 54, 55:—"It must have been very shortly after the murder of the innocents that Herod died. Only five days before his death he had made a frantic attempt at suicide, and had ordered the execution of his eldest son Antipater. His death-bed, which once more reminds us of Henry VIII., was accompanied by circumstances of peculiar horror; and it has been asserted that he died of a loathsome disease, which is hardly mentioned in history, except in the case of men who have been rendered infamous by an atrocity of persecuting zeal. On his bed of intolerable anguish, in that splendid and luxurious palace which he had built for himself, under the palms of Jericho, swollen with disease and scorched by thirst, ulcerated externally and glowing inwardly with a 'soft slow fire,' surrounded by plotting sons and plundering slaves, detesting all and detested by all, longing for death as a release from his tortures yet dreading it as the beginning of worse terrors, stung by remorse yet still unslaked with murder, a horror to all around

him yet in his guilty conscience a worse terror to himself, devoured by the premature corruption of an anticipated grave, eaten of worms as though visibly smitten by the finger of God's wrath after seventy years of successful villainy, the wretched old man, whom men had called the Great, lay in savage frenzy awaiting his last hour. As he knew that none would shed one tear for him, he determined that they should shed many for themselves, and issued an order that, under pain of death, the principal families of the kingdom and the chiefs of the tribes should come to Jericho. They came, and then, shutting them in the hippodrome, he secretly commanded his sister Salome that at the moment of his death they should all be massacred. And so, choking as it were with blood, devising massacres in its very delirium, the soul of Herod passed forth into the night."

For mention of the Temple of Herod see Note 5, following Chapter 6.

4. Gifts from the Wise Men to the Child Jesus.—The scriptural account of the visit of the wise men to Jesus and His mother states that they "fell down and worshipped him," and furthermore that "when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." The offering of gifts to a superior in rank, either as to worldly status or recognized spiritual endowment, was a custom of early days and still prevails in many oriental lands. It is worthy of note that we have no record of these men from the east offering gifts to Herod in his palace; they did, however, impart of their treasure to the lowly Infant, in whom they recognized the King they had come to seek. The tendency to ascribe occult significance to even trifling details mentioned in scripture, and particularly as regards the life of Christ, has led to many fanciful suggestions concerning the gold and frankincense and myrrh specified in this incident. Some have supposed a half-hidden symbolism therein—gold a tribute to His royal estate, frankincense an offering in recognition of His priesthood, and myrrh for His burial. The sacred record offers no basis for such conjecture. Myrrh and frankincense are aromatic resins derived from plants indigenous to eastern lands, and they have been used from very early times in medicine and in the preparation of perfumes and incense mixtures. They were presumably among the natural productions of the lands from which the magi came, though probably even there they were costly and highly esteemed. Such, together with gold, which is of value among all nations, were most appropriate as gifts for a king. Any mystical significance one may choose to attach to the presents must be remembered as his own supposition or fancy, and not as based on scriptural warrant.

5. Testimonies from Shepherds and Magi.—The following instructive note on the testimonies relating to Messiah's birth, is taken from the *Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association Manual* for 1897-8: "It will be observed that the testimonies concerning the birth of the Messiah are from two extremes, the lowly shepherds in the Judean field, and the learned magi from

the far east. We cannot think this is the result of mere chance, but that in it may be discerned the purpose and wisdom of God. All Israel was looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, and in the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, the hope of Israel—though unknown to Israel—is fulfilled. Messiah, of whom the prophet spake, is born. But there must be those who can testify of that truth, and hence to the shepherds who watched their flocks by night an angel was sent to say: 'Fear not, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord.' And for a sign of the truth of the message, they were to find the child wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger in Bethlehem. And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger; and when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. God had raised up to Himself witnesses among the people to testify that Messiah was born, that the hope of Israel was fulfilled. But there were classes of people among the Jews whom these lowly shepherd witnesses could not reach, and had they been able to reach them, the story of the angel's visit, and the concourse of angels singing the magnificent song of 'Peace on earth, good will to men,' would doubtless have been accounted an idle tale of superstitious folk, deceived by their own over-wrought imaginations or idle dreams. Hence God raised up another class of witnesses—the 'wise men from the east'—witnesses that could enter the royal palace of proud King Herod and boldly ask: 'Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him'; a testimony that startled Herod and troubled all Jerusalem. So that indeed God raised up witnesses for Himself to meet all classes and conditions of men—the testimony of angels for the poor and the lowly; the testimony of wise men for the haughty king and proud priests of Judea. So that of the things concerning the birth of Messiah, no less than of the things of His death and resurrection from the dead, His disciples could say, 'these things were not done in a corner.'

6. The Year of Christ's Birth.—In treating this topic Dr. Charles F. Deems (*The Light of the Nations*, p. 28), after giving careful consideration of the estimates, calculations, and assumptions of men who have employed many means in their investigation and reach only discordant results says: "It is annoying to see learned men use the same apparatus of calculation and reach the most diverse results. It is bewildering to attempt a reconciliation of these varying calculations." In an appended note the same author states: "For example: the birth of our Lord is placed in B. C. 1 by Pearson and Hug; B. C. 2 by Scalinger; B. C. 3 by Baronius and Paulus; B. C. 4 by Bengel, Wieseler, and Greswell; B. C. 5 by Usher and Petavius; B. C. 6 by Strong, Luvin, and Clark; B. C. 7 by Ideler and Sanclemente."

CHAPTER 9.

THE BOY OF NAZARETH.

Joseph, Mary, and her Son remained in Egypt until after the death of Herod the Great, which event was made known by another angelic visitation. Their stay in the foreign land was probably brief, for Herod did not long survive the babes he had slain in Bethlehem. In the return of the family from Egypt the evangelist finds a fulfilment of Hosea's prophetic vision of what should be: "Out of Egypt have I called my son."^a

It appears to have been Joseph's intention to make a home for the family in Judea, possibly at Bethlehem—the city of his ancestors and a place now even more endeared to him as the birthplace of Mary's Child—but, learning on the way that Herod's son Archelaus ruled in the place of his wicked father, Joseph modified his purpose; and, "being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."^b

While Archelaus, who appears to have been a natural heir to his infamous father's wickedness and cruelty, ruled in Judea,^c for a short time as king, then with the less exalted title of ethnarch, which had been decreed to him by the emperor, his brother Antipas governed as tetrarch in Galilee. Herod Antipas was well nigh as vicious and reprobate as others of his unprincipled family, but he was less aggressive in vindictiveness, and in that period of his reign was comparatively tolerant.^d

^a Matt. 2:15; compare Hos. 11:1.

^b Matt. 2:19-23. ^c Note 5, end of chapter.

^c Note 1, end of chapter.

^d Note 2, end of chapter.

Concerning the home life of Joseph and his family in Nazareth, the scriptural record makes but brief mention. The silence with which the early period of the life of Jesus is treated by the inspired historians is impressive; while the fanciful accounts written in later years by unauthorized hands are full of fictitious detail, much of which is positively revolting in its puerile inconsistency. None but Joseph, Mary, and the other members of the immediate family or close associates of the household could have furnished the facts of daily life in the humble home at Nazareth; and from these qualified informants Matthew and Luke probably derived the knowledge of which they wrote. The record made by those who knew is marked by impressive brevity. In this absence of detail we may see evidence of the genuineness of the scriptural account. Inventive writers would have supplied, as, later, such did supply, what we seek in vain within the chapters of the Gospels. With hallowed silence do the inspired scribes honor the boyhood of their Lord; he who seeks to invent circumstances and to invest the life of Christ with fictitious additions, dishonors Him. Read thoughtfully the attested truth concerning the childhood of the Christ: "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."^e

In such simplicity is the normal, natural development of the Boy Jesus made clear. He came among men to experience all the natural conditions of mortality; He was born as truly a dependent, helpless babe as is any other child; His infancy was in all common features as the infancy of others; His boyhood was actual boyhood, His development was as necessary and as real as that of all children. Over His mind had fallen the veil of forgetfulness common to all who are born to earth, by which the remembrance of primeval existence is shut off. The Child grew, and with growth there came to Him expansion of mind, development of faculties,

^e Luke 2:40.

and progression in power and understanding. His advancement was from one grace to another, not from gracelessness to grace; from good to greater good, not from evil to good; from favor with God to greater favor, not from estrangement because of sin to reconciliation through repentance and propitiation.^f

Our knowledge of Jewish life in that age justifies the inference that the Boy was well taught in the law and the scriptures, for such was the rule. He garnered knowledge by study, and gained wisdom by prayer, thought, and effort. Beyond question He was trained to labor, for idleness was abhorred then as it is now; and every Jewish boy, whether carpenter's son, peasant's child, or rabbi's heir, was required to learn and follow a practical and productive vocation. Jesus was all that a boy should be, for His development was unretarded by the dragging weight of sin; He loved and obeyed the truth and therefore was free.^g

Joseph and Mary, devout and faithful in all observances of the law, went up to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. This religious festival, it should be remembered, was one of the most solemn and sacred among the many ceremonial commemorations of the Jews; it had been established at the time of the peoples' exodus from Egypt, in remembrance of the outstretched arm of power by which God had delivered Israel after the angel of destruction had slain the firstborn in every Egyptian home and had mercifully passed over the houses of the children of Jacob.^h It was of such importance that its annual recurrence was made the beginning of the new year. The law required all males to present themselves before the Lord at the feast. The rule was that women should likewise attend if not lawfully detained; and Mary appears to have followed both the spirit of the law and the letter of the rule, for she habitually ac-

^f Note 3, end of chapter.

^g Compare His teachings after He had reached manhood, e.g. John 8:32.

^h Deut. 16:1-6; compare Exo. 12:2.

companied her husband to the annual gathering at Jerusalem.

When Jesus had attained the age of twelve years He was taken by His mother and Joseph to the feast as the law required; whether the Boy had ever before been present on such an occasion we are not told. At twelve years of age a Jewish boy was recognized as a member of his home community; he was required then to enter with definite purpose upon his chosen vocation; he attained an advanced status as an individual in that thereafter he could not be arbitrarily disposed of as a bond-servant by his parents; he was appointed to higher studies in school and home; and, when accepted by the priests, he became a "son of the law." It was the common and very natural desire of parents to have their sons attend the feast of the Passover and be present at the temple ceremonies as recognized members of the congregation when of the prescribed age. Thus came the Boy Jesus to the temple.

The feast proper lasted seven days, and in the time of Christ was annually attended by great concourses of Jews; Josephus speaks of such a Passover gathering as "an innumerable multitude."ⁱ The people came from distant provinces in large companies and caravans, as a matter of convenience and as a means of common protection against the marauding bands which are known to have infested the country. As members of such a company Joseph and his family traveled.

When, following the conclusion of the Passover, the Galilean company had gone a day's journey toward home, Joseph and Mary discovered to their surprise and deep concern that Jesus was not with their company. After a fruitless search among their friends and acquaintances, they turned back toward Jerusalem seeking the Boy. Their inquiries brought little comfort or assistance until three days had passed; then "they found him in the temple, sitting in

ⁱ Josephus; Wars of the Jews, ii, 1:3.

the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."^j It was no unusual thing for a twelve year old boy to be questioned by priests, scribes, or rabbis, nor to be permitted to ask questions of these professional expounders of the law, for such procedure was part of the educational training of Jewish youths; nor was there anything surprising in such a meeting of students and teachers within the temple courts, for the rabbis of that time were accustomed to give instruction there; and people, young and old, gathered about them, sitting at their feet to learn; but there was much that was extraordinary in this interview as the demeanor of the learned doctors showed, for never before had such a student been found, inasmuch as "all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." The incident furnishes evidence of a wellspent boyhood and proof of unusual attainments.^k

The amazement of Mary and her husband on finding the Boy in such distinguished company, and so plainly the object of deference and respect, and the joy of seeing again the beloved One who to them had been lost, did not entirely banish the memory of the anguish His absence had caused them. In words of gentle yet unmistakable reproof the mother said: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." The Boy's reply astonished them, in that it revealed, to an extent they had not before realized, His rapidly maturing powers of judgment and understanding. Said He: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Let us not say that there was unkind rebuke or unfilial reproof in the answer of this most dutiful of sons to His mother. His reply was to Mary a reminder of what she seems to have forgotten for the moment—the facts in the

^j Luke 2:46; read 41-52.

^k Compare Matt. 7:28, 29; 13:54; Mark 6:2; Luke 4:22.

matter of her Son's paternity. She had used the words "thy father and I;" and her Son's response had brought anew to her mind the truth that Joseph was not the Boy's father. She appears to have been astonished that One so young should so thoroughly understand His position with respect to herself. He had made plain to her the inadvertent inaccuracy of her words; His Father had not been seeking Him; for was He not even at that moment in His Father's house, and particularly engaged in His Father's business, the very work to which His Father had appointed Him?

He had in no wise intimated a doubt as to Mary's maternal relationship to Himself; though He had indisputably shown that He recognized as His Father, not Joseph of Nazareth, but the God of Heaven. Both Mary and Joseph failed to comprehend the full import of His words. Though He understood the superior claim of duty based on His divine Sonship, and had shown to Mary that her authority as earthly mother was subordinate to that of His immortal and divine Father, nevertheless He obeyed her. Interested as were the doctors in this remarkable Boy, much as He had given them to ponder over through His searching questions and wise answers, they could not detain Him, for the very law they professed to uphold enjoined strict obedience to parental authority. "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

What marvelous and sacred secrets were treasured in that mother's heart; and what new surprises and grave problems were added day after day in the manifestations of unfolding wisdom displayed by her more than mortal Son! Though she could never have wholly forgotten, at times she seemingly lost sight of, her Son's exalted personality. That such conditions should exist was perhaps divinely appointed. There could scarcely have been a full measure of truly hu-

man experience in the relationship between Jesus and His mother, or between Him and Joseph, had the fact of His divinity been always dominant or even prominently apparent. Mary appears never to have fully understood her Son; at every new evidence of His uniqueness she marveled and pondered anew. He was hers, and yet in a very real sense not wholly hers. There was about their relation to each other a mystery, awful yet sublime, a holy secret which that chosen and blessed mother hesitated even to tell over to herself. Fear must have contended with joy within her soul because of Him. The memory of Gabriel's glorious promises, the testimony of the rejoicing shepherds, and the adoration of the magi must have struggled with that of Simeon's portentous prophecy, directed to herself in person: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also."^l

As to the events of the eighteen years following the return of Jesus from Jerusalem to Nazareth, the scriptures are silent save for one rich sentence of greatest import: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."^m Plainly this Son of the Highest was not endowed with a fulness of knowledge, nor with the complete investiture of wisdom, from the cradle.ⁿ Slowly the assurance of His appointed mission as the Messiah, of whose coming He read in the law, the prophets, and the psalms, developed within His soul; and in devoted preparation for the ministry that should find culmination on the cross He passed the years of youth and early manhood. From the chronicles of later years we learn that He was reputed without question to be the son of Joseph and Mary, and was regarded as the brother of other and younger children of the family. He was spoken of both as a carpenter and a carpenter's son; and, until the beginning of His public ministry

^l Luke 2:35.

^m Luke 2:52.

ⁿ Note 3, end of chapter.

He appears to have been of little prominence even in the small home community.^o

He lived the simple life, at peace with His fellows, in communion with His Father, thus increasing in favor with God and men. As shown by His public utterances after He had become a man, these years of seclusion were spent in active effort, both physical and mental. Jesus was a close observer of nature and men. He was able to draw illustrations with which to point His teachings from the varied occupations, trades and professions; the ways of the lawyer and the physician, the manners of the scribe, the Pharisee and the rabbi, the habits of the poor, the customs of the rich, the life of the shepherd, the farmer, the vinedresser and the fisherman—were all known to Him. He considered the lilies of the field, and the grass in meadow and upland, the birds which sowed not nor gathered into barns but lived on the bounty of their Maker, the foxes in their holes, the petted house dog and the vagrant cur, the hen sheltering her brood beneath protecting wings—all these had contributed to the wisdom in which He grew, as had also the moods of the weather, the recurrence of the seasons, and all the phenomena of natural change and order.

Nazareth was the abode of Jesus until He was about thirty years of age; and, in accordance with the custom of designating individuals by the names of their home towns as additions to their personal names,^p our Lord came to be generally known as Jesus of Nazareth.^q He is also referred to as a Nazarene, or a native of Nazareth, and this fact is cited by Matthew as a fulfilment of earlier prediction, though our current compilation of scriptures constituting the Old Testament contains no record of such prophecy. It is practically certain that this prediction was contained in some one

^o Matt. 13:55, 56; Mark 6:3; Luke 4:22; compare Matt. 12:46, 47; Gal. 1:19.

^p For illustrative examples see Joseph of Arimathea (Mark 15:43); Mary Magdalene, so known from her native town of Magdala (Matt. 27:56); Judas Iscariot, possibly named after his home in Kerioth (Matt. 10:4; see page 225 herein.)

^q Matt. 21:11; John 18:5; 19:19; Acts 2:22; 3:6; see also Luke 4:16.

of the many scriptures extant in earlier days but since lost.^r That Nazareth was an obscure village, of little honor or renown, is evidenced by the almost contemptuous question of Nathanael, who, on being informed that the Messiah had been found in Jesus of Nazareth, asked: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"^s The incredulous query has passed into a proverb current even today as expressive of any unpopular or unpromising source of good. Nathanael lived in Cana, but a few miles from Nazareth, and his surprise at the tidings brought by Philip concerning the Messiah incidentally affords evidence of the seclusion in which Jesus had lived.

So passed the boyhood, youth, and early manhood of the Savior of mankind.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 9.

1. Archelaus Reigned in Herod's Stead.—"At his death Herod [the Great] left a will according to which his kingdom was to be divided among his three sons. Archelaus was to have Judea, Idumea, and Samaria, with the title of king (Matt. 2:22). Herod Antipas was to receive Galilee and Perea, with the title of tetrarch; Philip was to come into possession of the trans-Jordan territory with the title of tetrarch (Luke 3:1). This will was ratified by Augustus with the exception of the title given to Archelaus. Archelaus, after the ratification of Herod's will by Augustus, succeeded to the rule of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, having the title of ethnarch, with the understanding that, if he ruled well, he was to become king. He was, however, highly unpopular with the people, and his reign was marked by disturbances and acts of oppression. The situation became finally so intolerable that the Jews appealed to Augustus, and Archelaus was removed and sent into exile. This accounts for the statement in Matt. 2:22, and possibly also suggested the point of the parable (Luke 19:12, etc.)."—*Standard Bible Dictionary*, Funk and Wagnalls Co., article "Herod." Early in his reign he wreaked summary vengeance on the people who ventured to protest against a continuation of his father's violence, by slaughtering three thousand or more; and the awful deed of carnage was perpetrated in part within the precincts of the temple. (Josephus, *Antiquities* xvii, 9:1-3.)

2. Herod Antipas.—Son of Herod I (the Great) by a Samar-

^r Note 4, end of chapter.

^s John 1:45, 46.

itan woman, and full brother to Archelaus. By the will of his father he became tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (Matt. 14:1; Luke 3:19; 9:7; Acts 13:1; compare Luke 3:1). He repudiated his wife, a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petrea, and entered into an unlawful union with Herodias, the wife of his half-brother Herod Philip I (not the tetrarch Philip). John the Baptist was imprisoned and finally put to death, through the anger of Herodias over his denunciation of her union with Herod Antipas. Herodias urged Antipas to go to Rome and petition Cæsar for the title of king (compare Mark 6:14, etc.). Antipas is the Herod most frequently mentioned in the New Testament (Mark 6:17; 8:15; Luke 3:1; 9:7; 13:31; Acts 4:27; 13:1). He was the Herod to whom Pilate sent Jesus for examination, taking advantage of Christ being known as a Galilean, and of the coincident fact of Herod's presence in Jerusalem at the time in attendance at the Passover (Luke 23:6, etc.). For further details see Smith's, Cassell's, or the Standard Bible Dictionary.

3. Testimony of John the Apostle Concerning Christ's Development in Knowledge and Grace.—In a modern revelation, Jesus the Christ has confirmed the record of John the apostle, which record appears but in part in our compilation of ancient scriptures. John thus attests the actuality of natural development in the growth of Jesus from childhood to maturity: "And I, John, saw that he received not of the fullness at the first, but received grace for grace; and he received not of the fullness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fullness; and thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fullness at the first." (Doc. and Cov. 93:12-14). Notwithstanding this graded course of growth and development after His birth in the flesh, Jesus Christ had been associated with the Father from the beginning, as is set forth in the revelation cited. We read therein: "And he [John] bore record, saying, I saw his glory that he was in the beginning before the world was; therefore in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation, the light and the Redeemer of the world; the Spirit of truth, who came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men. The worlds were made by him: men were made by him: all things were made by him, and through him, and of him. And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us" (verses 7-11).

4. Missing Scripture.—Matthew's commentary on the abode of Joseph, Mary and Jesus at Nazareth, "and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene" (2:23), with the fact that no such saying of the prophets is found in any of the books contained in the Bible, suggests the certainty of lost scripture. Those who oppose the doctrine of continual revelation between God and His Church, on the ground that the Bible is complete as a collection of sacred scriptures, and that alleged revelation not found therein must therefore be spurious,

may profitably take note of the many books not included in the Bible, yet mentioned therein, generally in such a way as to leave no doubt that they were once regarded as authentic. Among these extra-Biblical scriptures, the following may be named; some of them are in existence to-day, and are classed with the Apocrypha; but the greater number are unknown. We read of the Book of the Covenant (Exo. 24:7); Book of the Wars of the Lord (Numb. 21:14); Book of Jasher (Josh. 10:13); Book of the Statutes (1 Sam. 10:25); Book of Enoch (Jude 14); Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41); Book of Nathan the Prophet, and that of Gad the Seer (1 Chron. 29:29); Book of Ahijah the Shilonite, and visions of Iddo the Seer (2 Chron. 9:29); Book of Shemaiah (2 Chron. 12:15); Story of the Prophet Iddo (2 Chron. 13:22); Book of Jehu (2 Chron. 20:34); the Acts of Uzziah, by Isaiah, the son of Amoz (2 Chron. 26:22); Sayings of the Seers (2 Chron. 33:19); a missing epistle of Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5:9); a missing epistle to the Ephesians (Eph. 3:3); missing epistle to the Colossians, written from Laodicea (Col. 4:16); a missing epistle of Jude (Jude 3).

5. Nazareth.—A town or “city” in Galilee, of which Biblical mention is found in the New Testament only. Josephus says nothing concerning the place. The name of the existing village, or the Nazareth of to-day, is *En-Nazirah*. This occupies an upland site on the southerly ridge of Lebanon, and “commands a splendid view of the Plain of Esdraelon and Mount Carmel, and is very picturesque in general” (Zenos). The author of the article “Nazareth” in Smith’s *Bible Dict.* identifies the modern En-Nazirah, with the Nazareth of old on the following grounds: “It is on the lower declivities of a hill or mountain (Luke 4:29); it is within the limits of the province of Galilee (Mark 1:9); it is near Cana (John 2:1, 2, 11); a precipice exists in the neighborhood (Luke 4:29); and a series of testimonials reaching back to Eusebius represent the place as having occupied the same position.” The same writer adds: “Its population is 3000 or 4000; a few are Mohammedans, the rest Latin and Greek Christians. Most of the houses are well built of stone, and appear neat and comfortable. The streets or lanes are narrow and crooked, and after rain are so full of mud and mire as to be almost impassable.” At the time of Christ’s life the town was not only regarded as unimportant by the Judeans who professed but little respect for Galilee or the Galileans, but as without honor by the Galileans themselves, as appears from the fact that the seemingly contemptuous question, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” was uttered by Nathanael (John 1:46), who was a Galilean and a native of Cana, a neighboring town to Nazareth (John 21:2). Nazareth owes its celebrity to its association with events in the life of Jesus Christ (Matt. 2:23; 13:54; Mark 1:9; 6:1; Luke 1:26; 2:4; 4:23, 34; John 1:45, 46; 19:19; Acts 2:22).

CHAPTER 10.

IN THE WILDERNESS OF JUDEA.

THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.

At a time definitely stated as the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, emperor of Rome, the people of Judea were greatly aroused over the strange preaching of a man theretofore unknown. He was of priestly descent, but untrained in the schools; and, without authorization of the rabbis or license from the chief priests, he proclaimed himself as one sent of God with a message to Israel. He appeared not in the synagogues nor within the temple courts, where scribes and doctors taught, but cried aloud in the wilderness. The people of Jerusalem and of adjacent rural parts went out in great multitudes to hear him. He disdained the soft garments and flowing robes of comfort, and preached in his rough desert garb, consisting of a garment of camel's hair held in place by a leathern girdle. The coarseness of his attire was regarded as significant. Elijah the Tishbite, that fearless prophet whose home had been the desert, was known in his day as "an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins;"^a and rough garments had come to be thought of as a distinguishing characteristic of prophets.^b Nor did this strange preacher eat the food of luxury and ease, but fed on what the desert supplied, locusts and wild honey.^c

The man was John, son of Zacharias, soon to be known as the Baptist. He had spent many years in the desert, apart from the abodes of men, years of preparation for his

^a 2 Kings 1:8.

^b Note 1, end of chapter.

^c Matt. 3:1-5; compare Lev. 11:22; see also Mark 1:1-8. Note 2, end of chapter.

particular mission. He had been a student under the tutelage of divine teachers; and there in the wilderness of Judea the word of the Lord reached him;^d as in similar environment it had reached Moses^e and Elijah^f of old. Then was heard "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."^g It was the voice of the herald, the messenger who, as the prophets had said, should go before the Lord to prepare His way.^h The burden of his message was "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And to such as had faith in his words and professed repentance, confessing their sins, he administered baptism by immersion in water—proclaiming the while, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."ⁱ

Neither the man nor his message could be ignored; his preaching was specific in promise to the repentant soul, and scathingly denunciatory to the hypocrite and the hardened sinner. When Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, prating of the law, the spirit of which they ceased not to transgress, and of the prophets, whom they dishonored, he denounced them as a generation of vipers, and demanded of them: "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" He brushed aside their oft-repeated boasts that they were the children of Abraham, saying, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."^j The ignoring of their claims to preferment as the children of Abraham was a strong rebuke,

^d Luke 3:2.

^e Exo. 3:1, 2.

^f 1 Kings 17:2-7.

^g Mark 1:3.

^h Mark 1:2; compare Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11:10; Luke 7:27.

ⁱ Matt. 3:11.

^j Matt. 3:7-10; see also Luke 3:3-9.

and a cause of sore affront alike to aristocratic Sadducee and rule-bound Pharisee. Judaism held that the posterity of Abraham had an assured place in the kingdom of the expected Messiah, and that no proselyte from among the Gentiles could possibly attain the rank and distinction of which the "children" were sure. John's forceful assertion that God could raise up, from the stones on the river bank, children to Abraham, meant to those who heard that even the lowest of the human family might be preferred before themselves unless they repented and reformed.^k Their time of wordy profession had passed; fruits were demanded, not barren though leafy profusion; the ax was ready, aye, at the very root of the tree; and every tree that produced not good fruit was to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

The people were astonished; and many, seeing themselves in their actual condition of dereliction and sin, as John, with burning words laid bare their faults, cried out: "What shall we do then?"^l His reply was directed against ceremonialism, which had caused spirituality to wither almost to death in the hearts of the people. Unselfish charity was demanded—"He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." The publicans or tax-farmers and collectors, under whose unjust and unlawful exactions the people had suffered so long, came asking: "Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you." To the soldiers who asked what to do he replied: "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."^m

The spirit of his demands was that of a practical religion, the only religion of any possible worth—the religion of right living. With all his vigor, in spite of his brusqueness, notwithstanding his forceful assaults on the degenerate customs

^k Compare a later instance, in which Christ similarly taught (John 8:33-59).

^l Luke 3:10; compare Acts 2:37.

^m Luke 3:10-15.

of the times, this John was no agitator against established institutions, no inciter of riot, no advocate of revolt, no promoter of rebellion. He did not assail the tax system but the extortions of the corrupt and avaricious publicans; he did not denounce the army, but the iniquities of the soldiers, many of whom had taken advantage of their position to bear false witness for the sake of gain and to enrich themselves by forcible seizure. He preached, what in the now current dispensation we call the first or fundamental principles of the gospel—"the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,"ⁿ comprising faith, which is vitalized belief, in God; genuine repentance, which comprises contrition for past offenses and a resolute determination to turn from sin; baptism by immersion in water at his hands as the hands of one having authority; and the higher baptism by fire or the bestowal of the Holy Ghost by an authority greater than that possessed by himself. His preaching was positive, and in many respects opposed to the conventions of the times; he made no appeal to the people through the medium of miraculous manifestations;^o and though many of his hearers attached themselves to him as disciples,^p he established no formal organization, nor did he attempt to form a cult. His demand for repentance was an individual call, as unto each acceptable applicant the rite of baptism was individually administered.

To the Jews, who were living in a state of expectancy, waiting for the long-predicted Messiah, the words of this strange prophet in the wilderness were fraught with deep portent. Could it be that he was the Christ? He spoke of One yet to come, mightier than himself, whose shoe-latchet he was not worthy to loosen,^q One who would separate the people as the thresher, fan in hand, blew the chaff from the

ⁿ Mark 1:1.

^o John 10:41.

^p John 1:35, 37; Matt. 11:2; Luke 7:18.

^q Note 3, end of chapter.

wheat; and, he added, that mightier One "will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable."^r

In such wise did the predicted herald of the Lord deliver his message. Himself he would not exalt; his office, however, was sacred to him, and with its functions he brooked no interference from priest, Levite, or rabbi. He was no respecter of persons; sin he denounced, sinners he excoriated, whether in priestly vestments, peasant garb, or royal robes. All the claims the Baptist had made for himself and his mission were later confirmed and vindicated by the specific testimony of Christ.^s John was the harbinger not alone of the kingdom but of the King; and to him the King in person came.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS—TO FULFIL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

When Jesus "began to be about thirty years of age,"^t He journeyed from His home in Galilee "to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him."^u

John and Jesus were second cousins; as to whether there had existed any close companionship between the two as boys or men we are not told. It is certain, however, that when Jesus presented Himself for baptism, John recognized in Him a sinless Man who stood in no need of repentance; and, as the Baptist had been commissioned to baptize for the remission of sins, he saw no necessity of administering the ordinance to Jesus. He who had received the confessions

^r Luke 3:17; see also Matt. 3:12; compare Mal. 3:2.

^s Matt. 11:11-14; 17:12; Luke 7:24-30.

^t Luke 3:23.

^u Matt. 3:13-15.

of multitudes now reverently confessed to One whom he knew was more righteous than himself. In the light of later events it appears that at this time John did not know that Jesus was the Christ, the Mightier One for whom he waited and whose forerunner he knew himself to be. When John expressed his conviction that Jesus needed no baptismal cleansing, our Lord, conscious of His own sinlessness, did not deny the Baptist's imputation, but nevertheless pressed His application for baptism with the significant explanation: "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." If John was able to comprehend the deeper meaning of this utterance, he must have found therein the truth that water baptism is not alone the means provided for gaining remission of sins, but is also an indispensable ordinance established in righteousness and required of all mankind as an essential condition for membership in the kingdom of God.^v

Jesus Christ thus humbly complied with the will of the Father, and was baptized of John by immersion in water. That His baptism was accepted as a pleasing and necessary act of submission was attested by what immediately ensued: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."^w Then John knew his Redeemer.

The four Gospel-writers record the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the baptized Jesus as accompanied by a visible manifestation "like a dove;" and this sign had been indicated to John as the foreappointed means by which the Messiah should be made known to him; and to that sign, before specified, was now added the supreme testimony of the Father as to the literal Sonship of Jesus. Matthew records

^v For treatment of Baptism as a universal requirement, see the author's "Articles of Faith" vi:18-29. Note 6, end of chapter.

^w Matt. 3:16, 17; compare Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22.

the Father's acknowledgment as given in the third person, "This is my beloved Son;" while both Mark and Luke give the more direct address, "Thou art my beloved Son." The variation, slight and essentially unimportant as it is though bearing on so momentous a subject, affords evidence of independent authorship and discredits any insinuation of collusion among the writers.

The incidents attending the emergence of Jesus from the baptismal grave demonstrate the distinct individuality of the three Personages of the Godhead. On that solemn occasion Jesus the Son was present in the flesh; the presence of the Holy Ghost was manifest through the accompanying sign of the dove, and the voice of the Eternal Father was heard from heaven. Had we no other evidence of the separate personality of each member of the Holy Trinity, this instance should be conclusive; but other scriptures confirm the great truth.^x

THE TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST.

Soon after His baptism, immediately thereafter as Mark asserts, Jesus was constrained by the promptings of the Spirit to withdraw from men and the distractions of community life, by retiring into the wilderness where He would be free to commune with His God. So strong was the influence of the impelling force that He was led thereby, or, as stated by the evangelist, driven, into solitary seclusion, in which He remained during forty days, "with the wild beasts" of the desert. This remarkable episode in our Lord's life is described, though not with equal fulness, in three of the Gospels;^y John is silent thereon.

The circumstances attending this time of exile and test must have been related by Jesus Himself, for of other human

^x Shortly before His death, the Savior promised the apostles that the Father would send unto them the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost (John 14:26, and 15:26). See the author's "Articles of Faith" ii:20-24.

^y Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-13.

witnesses there were none. The recorded narratives deal principally with events marking the close of the forty-day period, but considered in their entirety they place beyond doubt the fact that the season was one of fasting and prayer. Christ's realization that He was the chosen and foreordained Messiah came to Him gradually. As shown by His words to His mother on the occasion of the memorable interview with the doctors in the temple courts, He knew, when but a Boy of twelve years, that in a particular and personal sense He was the Son of God ; yet it is evident that a comprehension of the full purport of His earthly mission developed within Him only as He progressed step by step in wisdom. His acknowledgment by the Father, and the continued companionship of the Holy Ghost, opened His soul to the glorious fact of His divinity. He had much to think about, much that demanded prayer and the communion with God that prayer alone could insure. Throughout the period of retirement, he ate not, but chose to fast, that His mortal body might the more completely be subjected to His divine spirit.

Then, when He was hungry and physically weak, the tempter came with the insidious suggestion that He use His extraordinary powers to provide food. Satan had chosen the most propitious time for his evil purpose. What will mortals not do, to what lengths have men not gone, to assuage the pangs of hunger ? Esau bartered his birthright for a meal. Men have fought like brutes for food. Women have slain and eaten their own babes rather than endure the gnawing pangs of starvation. All this Satan knew when he came to the Christ in the hour of extreme physical need, and said unto Him : "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." During the long weeks of seclusion, our Lord had been sustained by the exaltation of spirit that would naturally attend such all-absorbing concentration of mind as His protracted meditation and communion with the heavens undoubtedly produced ; in such profound

devotion of spirit, bodily appetites were subdued and superseded; but the reaction of the flesh was inevitable.

Hungry as Jesus was, there was a temptation in Satan's words even greater than that embodied in the suggestion that He provide food for His famishing body—the temptation to put to proof the possible doubt implied in the tempter's "If." The Eternal Father had proclaimed Jesus as His Son; the devil tried to make the Son doubt that divine relationship. Why not prove the Father's interest in His Son at this moment of dire necessity? Was it proper that the Son of God should go hungry? Had the Father so soon forgotten as to leave His Beloved Son thus to suffer? Was it not reasonable that Jesus, faint from long abstinence, should provide for Himself, and particularly so since He could provide, and that by a word of command, *if* the voice heard at His baptism was that of the Eternal Father. *If* thou be in reality the Son of God, demonstrate thy power, and at the same time satisfy thy hunger—such was the purport of the diabolical suggestion. To have yielded would have been to manifest positive doubt of the Father's acknowledgment.

Moreover, the superior power that Jesus possessed had not been given to Him for personal gratification, but for service to others. He was to experience all the trials of mortality; another man, as hungry as He, could not provide for himself by a miracle; and though by miracle such a one might be fed, the miraculous supply would have to be given, not provided by himself. It was a necessary result of our Lord's dual nature, comprising the attributes of both God and man, that He should endure and suffer as a mortal while possessing at all times the ability to invoke the power of His own Godhood by which all bodily needs could be supplied or overcome. His reply to the tempter was sublime and positively final: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word

that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”^z The word that had proceeded from the mouth of God, upon which Satan would have cast mistrust, was that Jesus was the Beloved Son with whom the Father was well pleased. The devil was foiled; Christ was triumphant.

Realizing that he had utterly failed in his attempt to induce Jesus to use His inherent power for personal service, and to trust in Himself rather than rely upon the Father’s providence, Satan went to the other extreme and tempted Jesus to wantonly throw Himself upon the Father’s protection.^a Jesus was standing upon one of the high parts of the temple, a pinnacle or battlement, overlooking the spacious courts, when the devil said unto Him: “If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Again appears the implication of doubt.^b If Jesus was in fact the Son of God, could He not trust His Father to save Him, and particularly so as it was written^c that angels would guard Him and bear Him up? Christ’s reply to the tempter in the wilderness had embodied a scriptural citation, and this He had introduced with the impressive formula common to expounders of sacred writ—“It is written.” In the second attempt, the devil tried to support his suggestion by scripture, and employed a similar expression—“for it is written.” Our Lord met and answered the devil’s quotation with another, saying: “It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”^d

Beside the provocation to sin by wantonly placing Himself in danger, so that the Father’s love might be manifested in a miraculous rescue, or by refusing so to challenge the Father’s interposition demonstrate that He doubted His

^z Matt. 4:4; compare Deut. 8:3.

^a Note 4, end of chapter.

^b Note 5, end of chapter. Page 658 herein.

^c Matt. 4:6; Psalm 91:11, 12.

^d Matt. 4:5-7; compare Deut. 6:16.

status as the Beloved Son, there lurked an appeal to the human side of Christ's nature, in thought of the fame which an astounding exploit, such as that of leaping from the dizzy height of the temple turrets and alighting unhurt, would surely bring. We cannot resist the thought, though we be not justified in saying that any such had even momentary place in the Savior's mind, that to act upon Satan's suggestion, provided of course the outcome proved to be such as he had indicated, would have been to insure public recognition of Jesus as a Being superior to mortals. It would have been a sign and a wonder indeed, the fame of which would have spread as fire in the dry grass; and all Jewry would have been aflame with excitement and interest in the Christ.

The glaring sophistry of Satan's citation of scripture was unworthy a categorical reply; his doctrine deserved neither logic nor argument; his misapplication of the written word was nullified by scripture that was germane; the lines of the psalmist were met by the binding fiat of the prophet of the exodus, in which he had commanded Israel that they should not provoke nor tempt the Lord to work miracles among them. Satan tempted Jesus to tempt the Father. It is as truly a blasphemous interference with the prerogatives of Deity to set limitations or make fixations of time or place at which the divine power shall be made manifest as it is to attempt to usurp that power. God alone must decide when and how His wonders shall be wrought. Once more the purposes of Satan were thwarted and Christ again was victor.

In the third temptation the devil refrained from further appeal to Jesus to put either His own power or that of the Father to the test. Twice completely foiled, the tempter abandoned that plan of assault; and, discarding all disguise of purpose, submitted a definite proposition. From the top of a high mountain Jesus looked over the land with its wealth of city and field, of vineyard and orchard, of flocks

and of herds; and in vision He saw the kingdoms of the world and contemplated the wealth, the splendor, the earthly glory of them all. Then saith Satan unto Him: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." So wrote Matthew; the more extended version by Luke follows: "And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." We need not concern ourselves with conjecture as to whether Satan could have made good his promise in the event of Christ's doing him homage; certain it is Christ could have reached out, and have gathered to Himself the wealth and glory of the world had He willed so to do, and thereby have failed in His Messianic mission. This fact Satan knew full well. Many men have sold themselves to the devil for a kingdom and for less, aye, even for a few paltry pence.

The effrontery of his offer was of itself diabolical. Christ, the Creator of heaven and earth, tabernacled as He then was in mortal flesh, may not have remembered His pre-existent state, nor the part He had taken in the great council of the Gods;^e while Satan, an unembodied spirit—he the disinherited, the rebellious and rejected son—seeking to tempt the Being through whom the world was created by promising Him part of what was wholly His, still may have had, as indeed he may yet have, a remembrance of those primeval scenes. In that distant past, antedating the creation of the earth, Satan, then Lucifer, a son of the morning, had been rejected; and the Firstborn Son had been chosen. Now that the Chosen One was subject to the trials incident to mortality, Satan thought to thwart the divine purpose by making the Son of God subject to himself. He who had been vanquished by Michael and his hosts and cast down as a defeated rebel, asked the embodied Jehovah to worship

him. "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him."^f

It is not to be supposed that Christ's victorious emergence from the dark clouds of the three specified temptations exempted Him from further assaults by Satan, or insured Him against later trials of faith, trust, and endurance. Luke closes his account of the temptations following the forty-day fast as follows: "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season."^g This victory over the devil and his wiles, this triumph over the cravings of the flesh, the harassing doubts of the mind, the suggested reaching out for fame and material wealth, were great but not final successes in the struggle between Jesus, the embodied God, and Satan, the fallen angel of light. That Christ was subject to temptation during the period of His association with the apostles He expressly affirmed.^h That His temptations extended even to the agony in Gethsemane will appear as we proceed with this study. It is not given to the rest of us, nor was it given to Jesus, to meet the foe, to fight and overcome in a single encounter, once for all time. The strife between the immortal spirit and the flesh, between the offspring of God on the one hand, the world and the devil on the other, is persistent through life.

Few events in the evangelical history of Jesus of Nazareth have given rise to more discussion, fanciful theory, and barren speculation, than have the temptations. All such surmises we may with propriety ignore. To any believer in the holy scriptures, the account of the temptations therein given is sufficiently explicit to put beyond doubt or question the essential facts; to the unbeliever neither the Christ nor

^f Matt. 4:10, 11; compare Exo. 20:3; Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Josh. 24:14; 1 Sam. 7:3.

^g Luke 4:13.

^h Luke 22:28.

His triumph appeals. What shall it profit us to speculate as to whether Satan appeared to Jesus in visible form, or was present only as an unseen spirit; whether he spoke in audible voice, or aroused in the mind of his intended victim the thoughts later expressed by the written lines; whether the three temptations occurred in immediate sequence or were experienced at longer intervals? With safety we may reject all theories of myth or parable in the scriptural account, and accept the record as it stands; and with equal assurance may we affirm that the temptations were real, and that the trials to which our Lord was put constituted an actual and crucial test. To believe otherwise, one must regard the scriptures as but fiction.

A question deserving some attention in this connection is that of the peccability or impeccability of Christ—the question as to whether He was capable of sinning. Had there been no possibility of His yielding to the lures of Satan, there would have been no real test in the temptations, no genuine victory in the result. Our Lord was sinless yet peccable; He had the capacity, the ability to sin had He willed so to do. Had He been bereft of the faculty to sin, He would have been shorn of His free agency; and it was to safeguard and insure the agency of man that He had offered Himself, before the world was, as a redeeming sacrifice. To say that He could not sin because He was the embodiment of righteousness is no denial of His agency of choice between evil and good. A thoroughly truthful man cannot culpably lie; nevertheless his insurance against falsehood is not that of external compulsion, but of internal restraint due to his cultivated companionship of the spirit of truth. A really honest man will neither take nor covet his neighbor's goods, indeed it may be said that he cannot steal; yet he is capable of stealing should he so elect. His honesty is an armor against temptation; but the coat of mail, the helmet, the breastplate, and the greaves, are but an outward

covering; the man within may be vulnerable if he can be reached.

But why proceed with labored reasoning, which can lead to but one conclusion, when our Lord's own words and other scriptures confirm the fact? Shortly before His betrayal, when admonishing the Twelve to humility, He said: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations."ⁱ While here we find no exclusive reference to the temptations immediately following His baptism, the exposition is plain that He had endured temptations, and by implication, these had continued throughout the period of His ministry. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews expressly taught that Christ was peccable, in that He was tempted "in all points" as are the rest of mankind. Consider the unambiguous declaration: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."^j And further: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."^k

NOTES TO CHAPTER 10.

1. **Raiment of Camel's Hair.**—Through the prophet Zechariah (13:4) a time was foretold in which professing prophets would no longer "wear a rough garment to deceive." Of the raiment of camel's hair worn by John the Baptist, the Oxford and other marginal readings render the expression "a garment of hair" as more literal than the Bible text. Deems (*Light of the Nations*, p. 74, note) says: "The garment of camel's hair was not the camel's skin with the hair on, which would be too heavy to wear, but raiment woven of camel's hair, such as Josephus speaks of (B. J. i, 24:3)."

2. **Locusts and Wild Honey.**—Insects of the locust or grasshopper kind were specifically declared clean and suitable for food in the law given to Israel in the wilderness. "Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all

ⁱ Luke 22:28.

^j Heb. 4:14, 15.

^k Heb. 5:8.

four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth; even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind." (Lev. 11:21, 22.) At the present time locusts are used as food by many oriental peoples, though usually by the poorer classes only. Of the passage referring to locusts as part of the Baptist's food while he lived as a recluse in the desert, Farrar (*Life of Christ*, p. 97, note,) says: "The fancy that it means the pods of the so-called locust tree (carob) is a mistake. Locusts are sold as articles of food in regular shops for the purpose at Medina; they are plunged into salt boiling water, dried in the sun, and eaten with butter, but only by the poorest beggars." Geikie (*Life and Words of Christ*, vol. i, pp. 354, 355) gives place to the following as applied to the Baptist's life: "His only food was the locusts which leaped or flew on the bare hills, and the honey of wild bees which he found, here and there, in the clifts of the rocks, and his only drink a draught of water from some rocky hollow. Locusts are still the food of the poor in many parts of the East. 'All the Bedouins of Arabia, and the inhabitants of towns in Nedj and Hedjaz, are accustomed to eat them,' says Burckhardt. 'I have seen at Medina and Tayf, locust shops, where they are sold by measure. In Egypt and Nubia they are eaten only by the poorest beggars. The Arabs, in preparing them for eating, throw them alive into boiling water, with which a good deal of salt has been mixed, taking them out after a few minutes, and drying them in the sun. The head, feet, and wings, are then torn off, the bodies cleansed from the salt, and perfectly dried. They are sometimes eaten boiled in butter, or spread on unleavened bread mixed with butter.' In Palestine, they are eaten only by the Arabs on the extreme frontiers; elsewhere they are looked on with disgust and loathing, and only the very poorest use them. Tristram, however, speaks of them as 'very palatable.' 'I found them very good,' says he, 'when eaten after the Arab fashion, stewed with butter. They tasted somewhat like shrimps, but with less flavour.' In the wilderness of Judea, various kinds abound at all seasons, and spring up with a drumming sound, at every step, suddenly spreading their bright hind wings, of scarlet, crimson, blue, yellow, white, green, or brown, according to the species. They were 'clean,' under the Mosaic Law, and hence could be eaten by John without offence."

Concerning the mention of wild honey as food used by John, the author last quoted says in a continuation of the same paragraph: "The wild bees in Palestine are far more numerous than those kept in hives, and the greater part of the honey sold in the southern districts is obtained from wild swarms. Few countries, indeed, are better adapted for bees. The dry climate, and the stunted but varied flora, consisting largely of aromatic thymes, mints, and other similar plants, with crocuses in the spring, are very favourable to them, while the dry recesses of the limestone rocks everywhere afford them shelter and protection for their combs. In the wilderness of Judea, bees are far more numerous than in any other part of Palestine, and it is, to this

day, part of the homely dict of the Bedouins, who squeeze it from the combs and store it in skins."

3. John's Inferiority to the Mightier One He Proclaimed.—“One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose” (Luke 3:16), or “whose shoes I am not worthy to bear” (Matt. 3:11); this was the way by which the Baptist declared his inferiority to the Mightier One, who was to succeed and supersede him; and a more effective illustration would be difficult to frame. To loosen the shoe latchet or sandal thong, or to carry the shoes of another, “was a menial office betokening great inferiority on the part of the person performing it.” (Smith’s *Dict. of the Bible*.) A passage in the Talmud (*Tract. Kidduschin xxii:2*) requires a disciple to do for his teacher whatever a servant might be required to do for his master, except the loosing of his sandal thong. Some teachers urged that a disciple should carry his humility even to the extreme of carrying his master’s shoes. The humility of the Baptist, in view of the widespread interest his call aroused, is impressive.

4. The Order in which the Temptations Were Presented.—But two of the Gospel-writers specify the temptations to which Christ was subjected immediately after His baptism; Mark merely mentions the fact that Jesus was tempted. Matthew and Luke place first the temptation that Jesus provide for Himself by miraculously creating bread; the sequence of the later trials is not the same in the two records. The order followed in the text is that of Matthew.

5. The Devil’s “If.”—Note the later taunting use of that diabolical *if* as the Christ hung upon the cross. The rulers of the Jews, mocking the crucified Jesus in His agony said, “Let him save himself *if* he be the Christ.” And the soldier, reading the inscription at the head of the cross derided the dying God, saying: “*If* thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.” And yet again, the unrepentant malefactor by His side cried out, “*If* thou be Christ, save thyself and us.” (Luke 23:35-39.) How literally did those railers and mockers quote the very words of their father the devil (see John 8:44). See further, page 658 herein.

6. Baptism Required of All.—Baptism is required of all persons who live to the age of accountability in the flesh. None are exempt. Jesus Christ, who lived as a Man without sin in the midst of a sinful world, was baptized “to fulfil all righteousness.” Six centuries before this event, Nephi, prophesying to the people on the western continent, foretold the baptism of the Savior, and thus drew therefrom the necessity of baptism as a universal requirement: “And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water. . . . Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he sheweth unto the children of men, that according to the flesh, he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments” (B. of M., 2 Nephi 31:5, 7). See *The Articles of Faith*, vi:18-29.

CHAPTER 11.

FROM JUDEA TO GALILEE.

THE BAPTIST'S TESTIMONY OF JESUS.

During the period of our Lord's retirement in the wilderness the Baptist continued his ministry, crying repentance to all who would pause to hear, and administering baptism to such as came duly prepared and asking with right intent. The people generally were greatly concerned over the identity of John; and as the real import of the voice^a dawned upon them, their concern deepened into fear. The ever recurring question was, Who is this new prophet? Then the Jews, by which expression we may understand the rulers of the people, sent a delegation of priests and Levites of the Pharisaic party to personally question him. He answered without evasion, "I am not the Christ," and with equal decisiveness denied that he was Elias, or more accurately, Elijah, the prophet who, the rabbis said through a misinterpretation of Malachi's prediction, was to return to earth as the immediate precursor of the Messiah.^b Furthermore, he declared that he was not "that prophet," by which was meant the Prophet whose coming Moses had foretold,^c and who was not universally identified in the Jewish mind with the expected Messiah. "Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."^d The Pharisaic envoys then demanded of him his authority for baptizing; in reply

^a Luke 3:4.

^b John 1:21; compare Mal. 4:5. Note 1, end of chapter.

^c Deut. 18:15, 18; see page 45 herein.

^d John 1:22, 23; compare Isa. 40:3.

he affirmed that the validity of his baptisms would be attested by One who even then was amongst them, though they knew Him not, and averred: "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."^e

John's testimony, that Jesus was the Redeemer of the world, was declared as boldly as had been his message of the imminent coming of the Lord. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," he proclaimed; and, that none might fail to comprehend his identification of the Christ, he added: "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water."^f That the attestation of the ministering presence of the Holy Ghost through the material appearance "like a dove" was convincing to John is shown by his further testimony: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."^g On the day following that of the utterance last quoted, John repeated his testimony to two of his disciples, or followers, as Jesus passed, saying again: "Behold the Lamb of God."^h

THE FIRST DISCIPLES OF JESUS.ⁱ

Two of the Baptist's followers, specifically called disciples, were with him when for the second time he expressly designated Jesus as the Lamb of God. These were Andrew

^e John 1:25-27.

^f John 1:29-31.

^g John 1:32, 34; also verses 35, 36. Note 2, end of chapter.

^h Note 3, end of chapter.

ⁱ John 1:35-31.

and John; the latter came to be known in after years as the author of the fourth Gospel. The first is mentioned by name, while the narrator suppresses his own name as that of the second disciple. Andrew and John were so impressed by the Baptist's testimony that they immediately followed Jesus; and He, turning toward them asked: "What seek ye?" Possibly somewhat embarrassed by the question, or with a real desire to learn where He might be found later, they replied by another inquiry: "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?" Their use of the title Rabbi was a mark of honor and respect, to which Jesus did not demur. His courteous reply to their question assured them that their presence was no unwelcome intrusion. "Come and see," said He.^j The two young men accompanied Him, and remained with Him to learn more. Andrew, filled with wonder and joy over the interview so graciously accorded, and thrilled with the spirit of testimony that had been enkindled within his soul, hastened to seek his brother Simon, to whom he said: "We have found the Messias." He brought Simon to see and hear for himself; and Jesus, looking upon Andrew's brother, called him by name and added an appellation of distinction by which he was destined to be known throughout all later history: "Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas." The new name thus bestowed is the Aramaic or Syro-Chaldaic equivalent of the Greek "Petros," and of the present English "Peter," meaning "a stone."^k

On the following day Jesus set out for Galilee, possibly accompanied by some or all of his newly-made disciples; and on the way He found a man named Philip, in whom He recognized another choice son of Israel. Unto Philip He said: "Follow me." It was customary with rabbis and other teachers of that time to strive for popularity, that many might be drawn to them to sit at their feet and be known as

^j Note 4, end of chapter.

^k The name thus given was afterward confirmed, with accompaniments of promise; Matt. 16:18.

their disciples. Jesus, however, selected His own immediate associates ; and, as He found them and discerned in them the spirits who, in their preexistent state had been chosen for the earthly mission of the apostleship, He summoned them. They were the servants ; He was the Master.^l

Philip soon found his friend Nathanael, to whom he testified that He of whom Moses and the prophets had written had at last been found ; and that He was none other than Jesus of Nazareth. Nathanael, as his later history demonstrates, was a righteous man, earnest in his hope and expectation of the Messiah, yet seemingly imbued with the belief common throughout Jewry—that the Christ was to come in royal state as seemed befitting the Son of David. The mention of such a One coming from Nazareth, the reputed son of a humble carpenter, provoked wonder if not incredulity in the guileless mind of Nathanael, and he exclaimed : “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip’s answer was a repetition of Christ’s words to Andrew and John—“Come and see.” Nathanael left his seat under the fig tree,^m where Philip had found him, and went to see for himself. As he approached, Jesus said · “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” Nathanael saw that Jesus could read his mind, and asked in surprize : “Whence knowest thou me?” In reply Jesus showed even greater powers of penetration and perception under conditions that made ordinary observation unlikely if not impossible : “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.” Nathanael replied with conviction : “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel.” Earnest as the man’s testimony was, it rested mainly on his recognition of what he took to be a supernatural power in Jesus ; our Lord assured him that he should see yet greater things : “And he

^lTo the apostles the Lord said on a subsequent occasion: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you” (John 15:16; see also 6:70).

^mA favorite situation for rest, meditation, and study; 1 Kings 4:25; Micah 4:4.

saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

"THE SON OF MAN."

In the promise and prediction made by Christ to Nathanael, we find the significant title—The Son of Man—appearing for the first time, chronologically speaking, in the New Testament. It recurs, however, about forty times, excluding repetitions in parallel accounts in the several Gospels. In each of these passages it is used by the Savior distinctively to designate Himself. In three other instances the title appears in the New Testament, outside the Gospels; and in each case it is applied to the Christ with specific reference to His exalted attributes as Lord and God."

In the Old Testament, the phrase "son of man" occurs in ordinary usage, denoting any human son;ⁿ and it appears over ninety times as an appellation by which Jehovah addressed Ezekiel, though it is never applied by the prophet to himself.^p The context of the passages in which Ezekiel is addressed as "son of man" indicates the divine intention of emphasizing the human status of the prophet as contrasted with the divinity of Jehovah.

The title is used in connection with the record of Daniel's vision,^q in which was revealed the consummation, yet future, when Adam—the Ancient of Days—shall sit to judge his posterity;^r on which great occasion, the Son of Man is to appear and receive a dominion that shall be everlasting, transcendently superior to that of the Ancient of Days, and embracing every people and nation, all of whom shall serve the Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.^s

ⁿ Acts 7:56; Rev. 1:13; 14:14.

^o Job 25:6; Psalms 144:3; 146:3; see also 8:4 and compare Heb. 2:6-9.

^p Ezek. 2:1, 3, 6, 8; 3:1, 3, 4; 4:1; etc.

^q Dan. 7:13.

^r Dan. 7:13; 27:11; 78:15, 16; 107:54-57; 116.

^s Dan. 7:13; 49:6; 58:65; 65:5; 122:8. Observe that in modern revelation the title is used only as applying to the Christ in His resurrected and glorified state.

In applying the designation to Himself, the Lord invariably uses the definite article. "The Son of Man" was and is, specifically and exclusively, Jesus Christ. While as a matter of solemn certainty He was the only male human being from Adam down who was not the son of a mortal man, He used the title in a way to conclusively demonstrate that it was peculiarly and solely His own. It is plainly evident that the expression is fraught with a meaning beyond that conveyed by the words in common usage. The distinguishing appellation has been construed by many to indicate our Lord's humble station as a mortal, and to connote that He stood as the type of humanity, holding a particular and unique relationship to the entire human family. There is, however, a more profound significance attaching to the Lord's use of the title "The Son of Man"; and this lies in the fact that He knew His Father to be the one and only supremely exalted Man,^t whose Son Jesus was both in spirit and in body—the Firstborn among all the spirit-children of the Father, the Only Begotten in the flesh—and therefore, in a sense applicable to Himself alone, He was and is the Son of the "Man of Holiness," Elohim,^u the Eternal Father. In His distinctive titles of Sonship, Jesus expressed His spiritual and bodily descent from, and His filial submission to, that exalted Father.

As revealed to Enoch the Seer, "Man of Holiness" is one of the names by which God the Eternal Father is known; "and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ." We learn further that the Father of Jesus Christ thus proclaimed Himself to Enoch: "Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; Man of Counsel is my name; and Endless and Eternal is my name, also."^v "The

^t Note 5, end of chapter.

^u Page 38.

^v P. of G. P., Moses 6:57; 7:35; see also 7:24, 47, 54, 56, 59, 65. Observe that Satan addressed Moses as "son of man" in a blasphemous attempt to coerce Moses into worshiping him by emphasizing the mortal weakness and inferiority of the man in contrast with his own false pretension of godship. (Moses 1:12.)

Son of Man" is in great measure synonymous with "The Son of God," as a title denoting divinity, glory, and exaltation; for the "Man of Holiness," whose Son Jesus Christ reverently acknowledges Himself to be, is God the Eternal Father.

THE MIRACLE AT CANA IN GALILEE.

Soon after the arrival of Jesus in Galilee we find Him and His little company of disciples at a marriage party in Cana, a neighboring town to Nazareth. The mother of Jesus was at the feast; and for some reason not explained in John's narrative,^w she manifested concern and personal responsibility in the matter of providing for the guests. Evidently her position was different from that of one present by ordinary invitation. Whether this circumstance indicates the marriage to have been that of one of her own immediate family, or some more distant relative, we are not informed.

It was customary to provide at wedding feasts a sufficiency of wine, the pure though weak product of the local vineyards, which was the ordinary table beverage of the time. On this occasion the supply of wine was exhausted, and Mary told Jesus of the deficiency. Said He: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." The noun of address, "Woman," as applied by a son to his mother may sound to our ears somewhat harsh, if not disrespectful; but its use was really an expression of opposite import.^x To every son, the mother ought to be preeminently the woman of women; she is the one woman in the world to whom the son owes his earthly existence; and though the title "Mother" belongs to every woman who has earned the honors of maternity, yet to no child is there more than one woman whom by natural right he can address by that title of respectful acknowledgment. When, in the last dread

^w John 2:1-11.

^x "The address 'Woman' was so respectful that it might be and was, addressed to the queenliest."—(Farrar, "The Life of Christ," p. 134.)

scenes of His mortal experience, Christ hung in dying agony upon the cross, He looked down upon the weeping Mary, His mother, and commended her to the care of the beloved apostle John, with the words: "Woman, behold thy son!"^y Can it be thought that in this supreme moment, our Lord's concern for the mother from whom He was about to be separated by death was associated with any emotion other than that of honor, tenderness and love?^z

Nevertheless, His words to Mary at the marriage feast may have conveyed a gentle reminder of her position as the mother of a Being superior to herself; even as on that earlier occasion when she had found her Boy, Jesus, in the temple, He had brought home to her the fact that her jurisdiction over Him was not supreme. The manner in which she told Him of the insufficiency of wine probably suggested an intimation that He use His more than human power, and by such means supply the need. It was not her function to direct or even to suggest the exercise of the power inherent in Him as the Son of God; such had not been inherited from her. "What have I to do with thee?" He asked; and added: "Mine hour is not yet come." Here we find no disclaimer of the ability to do what she apparently wanted Him to do, but the plain implication that He would act only when the time was right for the purpose, and that He, not she, must decide when that time had come. She understood His meaning, in part at least, and contented herself by instructing the servants to do whatsoever He directed. Here again is evidence of her position of responsibility and domestic authority at the social gathering.

The time for His intervention soon arrived. There stood within the place six water pots;^a these He directed the servants to fill with water. Then, without audible command or

^y John 19:26.

^z On a few occasions Jesus used the address "Woman" in a general way: Matt. 15:28; Luke 13:12; John 4:21; 8:10; etc.

^a Note 6, end of chapter.

formula of invocation, as best we know, He caused to be effected a transmutation within the pots, and when the servants drew therefrom, it was wine, not water that issued. At a Jewish social gathering, such as was this wedding festival, some one, usually a relative of the host or hostess, or some other one worthy of the honor, was made governor of the feast, or, as we say in this day, chairman, or master of ceremonies. To this functionary the new wine was first served; and he, calling the bridegroom, who was the real host, asked him why he had reserved his choice wine till the last, when the usual custom was to serve the best at the beginning, and the more ordinary later. The immediate result of this, the first recorded of our Lord's miracles, is thus tersely stated by the inspired evangelist: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."^b

The circumstances incident to the miraculous act are instructive to contemplate. The presence of Jesus at the marriage, and His contribution to the successful conduct of the feast, set the seal of His approval upon the matrimonial relationship and upon the propriety of social entertainment. He was neither a recluse nor an ascetic; He moved among men, eating and drinking, as a natural, normal Being.^c On the occasion of the feast He recognized and heeded the demands of the liberal hospitality of the times, and provided accordingly. He, who but a few days before had revolted at the tempter's suggestion that He provide bread for His impoverished body, now used His power to supply a luxury for others. One effect of the miracle was to confirm the trust of those whose belief in Him as the Messiah was yet young and untried. "His disciples believed on him"; surely they had believed in some measure before, otherwise they

^b John 2:11.

^c The absence of all false austerity and outward show of abnormal abstinence in His life furnished an imagined excuse for unfounded charges of excess, through which He was said to be a glutton and a winebibber. (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34.)

would not have followed Him; but their belief was now strengthened and made to approach, if indeed it did not attain, the condition of abiding faith in their Lord. The comparative privacy attending the manifestation is impressive; the moral and spiritual effect was for the few, the inauguration of the Lord's ministry was not to be marked by public display.

MIRACLES IN GENERAL.

The act of transmutation whereby water became wine was plainly a miracle, a phenomenon not susceptible of explanation, far less of demonstration, by what we consider the ordinary operation of natural law. This was the beginning of His miracles, or as expressed in the revised version of the New Testament, "his signs." In many scriptures miracles are called signs, as also wonders, powers, works, wonderful works, mighty works,^d etc. The spiritual effect of miracles would be unattained were the witnesses not caused to inwardly wonder, marvel, ponder and inquire; mere surprize or amazement may be produced by deception and artful trickery. Any miraculous manifestation of divine power would be futile as a means of spiritual effect were it unimpressive. Moreover, every miracle is a sign of God's power; and signs in this sense have been demanded of prophets who professed to speak by divine authority, though such signs have not been given in all cases. The Baptist was credited with no miracle, though he was pronounced by the Christ as more than a prophet;^e and the chronicles of some earlier prophets^f are devoid of all mention of miracles. On the other hand, Moses, when commissioned to deliver Israel from Egypt, was made to understand that the Egyptians

^d Matt. 7:22; 11:20; 12:38; 16:1; 24:24; Mark 6:14; Luke 10:13; John 2:18; 7:21; 10:25; 14:11; Acts 6:8; 8:6; 14:3; 19:11; Rom. 15:19; Rev. 13:13; etc.

^e John 10:41; Matt. 11:9.

^f For example Zechariah and Malachi.

would look for the testimony of miracles, and he was abundantly empowered therefor.^g

Miracles cannot be in contravention of natural law, but are wrought through the operation of laws not universally or commonly recognized. Gravitation is everywhere operative, but the local and special application of other agencies may appear to nullify it—as by muscular effort or mechanical impulse a stone is lifted from the ground, poised aloft, or sent hurtling through space. At every stage of the process, however, gravity is in full play, though its effect is modified by that of other and locally superior energy. The human sense of the miraculous wanes as comprehension of the operative process increases. Achievements made possible by modern invention of telegraph and telephone with or without wires, the transmutation of mechanical power into electricity with its manifold present applications and yet future possibilities, the development of the gasoline motor, the present accomplishments in aerial navigation—these are no longer miracles in man's estimation, because they are all in some degree understood, are controlled by human agency, and, moreover, are continuous in their operation and not phenomenal. We arbitrarily classify as miracles only such phenomena as are unusual, special, transitory, and wrought by an agency beyond the power of man's control.

In a broader sense, all nature is miracle. Man has learned that by planting the seed of the grape in suitable soil, and by due cultivation, he may conduce to the growth of what shall be a mature and fruitful vine; but is there no miracle, even in the sense of inscrutable processes, in that development? Is there less of real miracle in the so-called natural course of plant development—the growth of root, stem, leaves, and fruit, with the final elaboration of the rich nectar of the vine—than there was in what appears supernatural in the transmutation of water into wine at Cana?

^g Exo. 3:20; 4:1-9. Note 8, end of chapter.

In the contemplation of the miracles wrought by Christ, we must of necessity recognize the operation of a power transcending our present human understanding. In this field, science has not yet advanced far enough to analyze and explain. To deny the actuality of miracles on the ground that, because we cannot comprehend the means, the reported results are fictitious, is to arrogate to the human mind the attribute of omniscience, by implying that what man cannot comprehend cannot be, and that therefore he is able to comprehend all that is. The miracles of record in the Gospels are as fully supported by evidence as are many of the historical events which call forth neither protest nor demand for further proof. To the believer in the divinity of Christ, the miracles are sufficiently attested; to the unbeliever they appear but as myths and fables.^h

To comprehend the works of Christ, one must know Him as the Son of God; to the man who has not yet learned to know, to the honest soul who would inquire after the Lord, the invitation is ready; let him "Come and see."

NOTES TO CHAPTER II.

I. Misunderstanding of Malachi's Prediction.—In the closing chapter of the compilation of scriptures known to us as the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi thus describes a condition incident to the last days, immediately preceding the second coming of Christ: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." The fateful prophecy concludes with the following blessed and far-reaching promise: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Malachi 4:1, 2, 5, 6.) It has been held by theologians and Bible commentators that this prediction had reference to the birth and ministry of John the Baptist, (compare Matt. 11:14; 17:11; Mark 9:11; Luke 1:17), upon whom rested the spirit and power of

^h Note 7, end of chapter.

Elias (Luke 1:17). However, we have no record of Elijah having ministered unto the Baptist, and furthermore, the latter's ministry, glorious though it was, justifies no conclusion that in him did the prophecy find its full realization. In addition, it should be remembered, that the Lord's declaration through Malachi, relative to the day of burning in which the wicked would be destroyed as stubble, yet awaits fulfilment. It is evident, therefore, that the commonly accepted interpretation is at fault, and that we must look to a later date than the time of John for the fulfilment of Malachi's prediction. The later occasion has come; it belongs to the present dispensation, and marks the inauguration of a work specially reserved for the Church in these latter days. In the course of a glorious manifestation to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, April 3d, 1836, there appeared unto them Elijah, the prophet of old, who had been taken from earth while still in the body. He declared unto them: "Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he (Elijah) should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors." (Doc. and Cov. 110:13-16.) See also *The House of the Lord*, pp. 82-83.

2. The Sign of the Dove.—"John the Baptist had the privilege of beholding the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a dove, or rather in the *sign* of the dove, in witness of that administration. The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove. The Holy Ghost is a personage, and is in the form of a personage. It does not confine itself to the *form* of the dove, but in *sign* of the dove. The Holy Ghost cannot be transformed into a dove; but the sign of a dove was given to John to signify the truth of the deed, as the dove is an emblem or token of truth and innocence."—From Sermon by Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 260-261.

3. The Testimony of John the Baptist.—Observe that the Baptist's testimony to the divinity of Christ's mission is recorded as having been given after the period of our Lord's forty-day fast and temptations, and therefore approximately six weeks subsequent to the baptism of Jesus. To the deputation of priests and Levites of the Pharisaic party, who visited him by direction of the rulers, probably by appointment from the Sanhedrin, John, after disavowing that he was the Christ or any one of the prophets specified in the inquiry, said: "There standeth one among you whom ye know not; he it is who coming after me is preferred before me." On the next day, and again on the day following that, he bore public testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God; and on the third day after the visit of the priests and Levites to John, Jesus started on the journey to Galilee (John 1:19-43).

John's use of the designation "Lamb of God" implied his

conception of the Messiah as One appointed for sacrifice, and his use of the term is the earliest mention found in the Bible. For later Biblical applications, direct or implied, see Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 1:19; Rev. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 17; etc.

4. **"Come and See."**—The spirit of our Lord's invitation to the young truth seekers, Andrew and John, is manifest in a similar privilege extended to all. The man who would know Christ must come to Him, to see and hear, to feel and know. Missionaries may carry the good tidings, the message of the gospel, but the response must be an individual one. Are you in doubt as to what that message means to-day? Then come and see for yourself. Would you know where Christ is to be found? Come and see.

5. **The Eternal Father a Resurrected, Exalted Being.**—“As the Father hath power in himself, so hath the Son power in himself, to lay down his life and take it again, so he has a body of his own. The Son doeth what he hath seen the Father do: then the Father hath some day laid down his life and taken it again; so he has a body of his own; each one will be in his own body.”—Joseph Smith; see *Hist. of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 426.

“God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil was rent to-day, and the Great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible,—I say, if you were to see him to-day, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image, and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another.”—Joseph Smith; see *Compendium*, p. 190.

6. **Waterpots for Ceremonial Cleansing.**—In the house at Cana there stood in a place specially reserved, six waterpots of stone “after the manner of the purifying of the Jews.” Vessels of water were provided as a matter of prescribed order in Jewish homes, to facilitate the ceremonial washings enjoined by the law. From these pots or jars the water was drawn off as required; they were reservoirs holding the supply, not vessels used in the actual ablution.

7. **“The Attitude of Science Towards Miracles”** is the subject of a valuable article by Prof. H. L. Orchard, published in *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain*, 1910, vol. 42, pp. 81-122. This article was the Gunning Prize Essay for 1909. After a lengthy analytical treatment of his subject, the author presents the following summation, which was concurred in by those who took part in the ensuing discussions: “We here complete our scientific investigation of Bible Miracles. It has embraced (1) the *nature* of the phenomenon; (2) the *conditions* under which it is alleged to have occurred; (3) the character of the *testimony* to its occurrence. To the inquiry—Were the Bible miracles probable? science answers in the affirmative. To the further inquiry—Did

they actually occur? the answer of science is again, and very emphatically, in the affirmative. If we liken them to gold, she has made her assay and says the gold is pure. Or the Bible miracles may be compared to a string of pearls. If science seeks to know whether the pearls are genuine, she may apply chemical and other tests to the examination of their *character*; she may search into the *conditions and circumstances* in which the alleged pearls were found. Were they first found in an oyster, or in some manufacturing laboratory? And she may investigate the *testimony* of experts. Should the result of any one of these examinations affirm the genuineness of the pearls, science will be slow to believe that they are 'paste'; if all the results declare their genuineness, science will not hesitate to say that they are true pearls. This, as we have seen, is the case of the Bible miracles. Science, therefore, affirms *their actual occurrence*."

8. The Testimony of Miracles.—The Savior's promise in a former day (Mark 16: 17-18), as in the present dispensation (Doc. and Cov. 84:65-73), is definite, to the effect that specified gifts of the Spirit are to follow the believer as signs of divine favor. The possession and exercise of such gifts may be taken therefore as essential features of the Church of Christ. Nevertheless we are not justified in regarding the evidence of miracles as infallible testimony of authority from heaven; on the other hand, the scriptures furnish abundant proof that spiritual powers of the baser sort have wrought miracles, and will continue so to do, to the deceiving of many who lack discernment. If miracles be accepted as infallible evidence of godly power, the magicians of Egypt, through the wonders which they accomplished in opposition to the ordained plan for Israel's deliverance, have as good a claim to our respect as has Moses (Exo. 7:11). John the Revealer saw in vision a wicked power working miracles, and thereby deceiving many; doing great wonders, even bringing fire from heaven (Rev. 13:11-18). Again, he saw three unclean spirits, whom he knew to be 'the spirits of devils working miracles' (Rev. 16:13-14). Consider, in connection with this, the prediction made by the Savior:—'There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect' (Matt. 24:24). The invalidity of miracles as a proof of righteousness is indicated in an utterance of Jesus Christ regarding the events of the great judgment:—'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity' (Matt. 7:22-23). The Jews, to whom these teachings were addressed, knew that wonders could be wrought by evil powers; for they charged Christ with working miracles by the authority of Beelzebub the prince of devils (Matt. 12:22-30; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15).—From the author's *The Articles of Faith*, xii:25, 26.

CHAPTER 12.

EARLY INCIDENTS IN OUR LORD'S PUBLIC
MINISTRY.

FIRST CLEARING OF THE TEMPLE.

Soon after the marriage festivities in Cana, Jesus, accompanied by His disciples, as also by His mother and other members of the family, went to Capernaum, a town pleasantly situated near the northerly end of the Sea of Galilee or Lake of Gennesaret^a and the scene of many of our Lord's miraculous works; indeed it came to be known as His own city.^b Because of the unbelief of its people it became a subject of lamentation to Jesus when in sorrow He prefigured the judgment that would befall the place.^c The exact site of the city is at present unknown. On this occasion Jesus tarried but a few days at Capernaum; for the time of the annual Passover was near, and in compliance with Jewish law and custom He went up to Jerusalem.

The synoptic Gospels,^d which are primarily devoted to the labors of Christ in Galilee, contain no mention of His attendance at the paschal festival between His twelfth year and the time of His death; to John alone are we indebted for the record of this visit at the beginning of Christ's public ministry. It is not improbable that Jesus had been present at other Passovers during the eighteen years over which the evangelists pass in complete and reverent silence; but at any or all such earlier visits, He, not being thirty years old, could not have assumed the right or privilege of a teacher without contravening established customs.^e It is worth our attention

^a Note 1, end of chapter.

^b John 2: 12; compare Matt. 4: 13; 9: 1.

^c Matt. 11: 23; Luke 10: 15.

^d Note 2, end of chapter.

^e Note 3, end of chapter.

to note that on this, the first recorded appearance of Jesus in the temple subsequent to His visit as a Boy, He should resume His "Father's business" where He had before been engaged. It was in His Father's service that He had been found in discussion with the doctors of the law,^f and in His Father's cause He was impelled to action on this later occasion.

The multitudinous and mixed attendance at the Passover celebration has already received passing mention;^g some of the unseemly customs that prevailed are to be held in mind. The law of Moses had been supplemented by a cumulative array of rules, and the rigidly enforced requirements as to sacrifices and tribute had given rise to a system of sale and barter within the sacred precincts of the House of the Lord. In the outer courts were stalls of oxen, pens of sheep, cages of doves and pigeons; and the ceremonial fitness of these sacrificial victims was cried aloud by the sellers, and charged for in full measure. It was the custom also to pay the yearly poll tribute of the sanctuary at this season—the ransom offering required of every male in Israel, and amounting to half a shekel^h for each, irrespective of his relative poverty or wealth. This was to be paid "after the shekel of the sanctuary," which limitation, as rabbis had ruled, meant payment in temple coin. Ordinary money, varieties of which bore effigies and inscriptions of heathen import, was not acceptable, and as a result, money-changers plied a thriving trade on the temple grounds.

Righteously indignant at what He beheld, zealous for the sanctity of His Father's House, Jesus essayed to clear the place;ⁱ and, pausing not for argument in words, He promptly applied physical force almost approaching violence—the one form of figurative language that those corrupt barterers for

^f Page 114; Luke 2: 46-49.

^g Page 113. Note 4, end of chapter.

^h Exo. 30:11-16. Note 11, end of chapter.

ⁱ John 2:14-17.

self could best understand. Hastily improvizing a whip of small cords, He laid about Him on every side, liberating and driving out sheep, oxen, and human traffickers, upsetting the tables of the exchangers and pouring out their heterogeneous accumulations of coin. With tender regard for the imprisoned and helpless birds He refrained from assaulting their cages; but to their owners He said: "Take these things hence;" and to all the greedy traders He thundered forth a command that made them quail: "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." His disciples saw in the incident a realization of the psalmist's line: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."^j

The Jews, by which term we mean the priestly officials and rulers of the people, dared not protest this vigorous action on the ground of unrighteousness; they, learned in the law, stood self-convicted of corruption, avarice, and of personal responsibility for the temple's defilement. That the sacred premises were in sore need of a cleansing they all knew; the one point upon which they dared to question the Cleanser was as to why He should thus take to Himself the doing of what was their duty. They practically submitted to His sweeping intervention, as that of one whose possible investiture of authority they might be yet compelled to acknowledge. Their tentative submission was based on fear, and that in turn upon their sin-convicted consciences. Christ prevailed over those haggling Jews by virtue of the eternal principle that right is mightier than wrong, and of the psychological fact that consciousness of guilt robs the culprit of valor when the imminence of just retribution is apparent to his soul.^k Yet, fearful lest He should prove to be a prophet with power, such as no living priest or rabbi even professed to be, they timidly asked for credentials of His authority—"What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou

^j Compare Psalm 69:9.

^k Note 5, end of chapter.

doest these things?" Curtly, and with scant respect for this demand, so common to wicked and adulterous men,^l Jesus replied: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."^m

Blinded by their own craft, unwilling to acknowledge the Lord's authority, yet fearful of the possibility that they were opposing one who had the right to act, the perturbed officials found in the words of Jesus reference to the imposing temple of masonry within whose walls they stood. They took courage; this strange Galilean, who openly flouted their authority, spoke irreverently of their temple, the visible expression of the profession they so proudly flaunted in words—that they were children of the covenant, worshipers of the true and living God, and hence superior to all heathen and pagan peoples. With seeming indignation they rejoined: "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?"ⁿ Though frustrated in their desire to arouse popular indignation against Jesus at this time, the Jews refused to forget or forgive His words. When afterward He stood an undefended prisoner, undergoing an illegal pretense of trial before a sin-impeached court, the blackest perjury uttered against Him was that of the false witnesses who testified: "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands."^o And while He hung in mortal suffering, the scoffers who passed by the cross wagged their heads and taunted the dying Christ with "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross."^p Yet His words to the Jews who had demanded the credentials of a sign had no reference to the colossal Temple of Herod, but to the sanctuary of His own body, in which, more liter-

^l Matt. 12:38, 39; compare 16:1; Mark 8:11; John 6:30; I Cor. 1:22.

^m John 2:19; read verses 18-22.

ⁿ Note 6, end of chapter.

^o Mark 14:58. Page 624 herein.

^p Mark 15:29, 30.

ally than in the man-built Holy of Holies, dwelt the ever living Spirit of the Eternal God. "The Father is in me" was His doctrine.^q

"He spake of the temple of His body," the real tabernacle of the Most High.^r This reference to the destruction of the temple of His body, and the renewal thereof after three days, is His first recorded prediction relating to His appointed death and resurrection. Even the disciples did not comprehend the profound meaning of His words until after His resurrection from the dead; then they remembered and understood. The priestly Jews were not as dense as they appeared to be, for we find them coming to Pilate while the body of the crucified Christ lay in the tomb, saying: "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again."^s Though we have many records of Christ having said that He would die and on the third day would rise again, the plainest of such declarations were made to the apostles rather than openly to the public. The Jews who waited upon Pilate almost certainly had in mind the utterance of Jesus when they had stood, nonplussed before Him, at the clearing of the temple courts.^t

Such an accomplishment as that of defying priestly usage and clearing the temple purlieus by force could not fail to impress, with varied effect, the people in attendance at the feast; and they, returning to their homes in distant and widely separated provinces, would spread the fame of the courageous Galilean Prophet. Many in Jerusalem believed on Him at the time, mainly because they were attracted by the miracles He wrought; but He refused to "commit himself unto them," realizing the insecure foundation of their professions. Popular adulation was foreign to His purpose;

^q John 10:38; 17:21.

^r John 2:19-22; compare I Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; see further Col. 2:9; Heb. 8:2.

^s Matt. 27:63. Page 665.

^t As Canon Farrar has tersely written, "Unless the 'we remember' was a distinct falsehood, they could have been referring to no other occasion than this." ("Life of Christ," p. 155.)

He wanted no motley following, but would gather around Him such as received the testimony of His Messiahship from the Father. "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."^a

The incident of Christ's forcible clearing of the temple is a contradiction of the traditional conception of Him as of One so gentle and unassertive in demeanor as to appear unmanly. Gentle He was, and patient under affliction, merciful and long-suffering in dealing with contrite sinners, yet stern and inflexible in the presence of hypocrisy, and unsparing in His denunciation of persistent evil-doers. His mood was adapted to the conditions to which He addressed Himself; tender words of encouragement or burning expletives of righteous indignation issued with equal fluency from His lips. His nature was no poetic conception of cherubic sweetness ever present, but that of a Man, with the emotions and passions essential to manhood and manliness. He, who often wept with compassion, at other times evinced in word and action the righteous anger of a God. But of all His passions, however gently they rippled or strongly surged, He was ever master. Contrast the gentle Jesus moved to hospitable service by the needs of a festal party in Cana, with the indignant Christ plying His whip, and amidst commotion and turmoil of His own making, driving cattle and men before Him as an unclean herd.

JESUS AND NICODEMUS.^a

That the wonderful deeds wrought by Christ at and about the time of this memorable Passover had led some of the learned, in addition to many of the common people, to believe in Him, is evidenced by the fact that Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee in profession and who occupied a high place as one of the rulers of the Jews, came to Him on an errand

^a John 2:23-25.

^a John 3:1-21.

of inquiry. There is significance in the circumstance that this visit was made at night. Apparently the man was impelled by a genuine desire to learn more of the Galilean, whose works could not be ignored; though pride of office and fear of possible suspicion that he had become attached to the new Prophet led him to veil his undertaking with privacy.^v Addressing Jesus by the title he himself bore, and which he regarded as one of honor and respect, he said: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."^w Whether his use of the plural pronoun "we" indicates that he was sent by the Sanhedrin, or by the society of Pharisees—the members of which were accustomed to so speak, as representatives of the order—or was employed in the rhetorical sense as indicating himself alone, is of little importance. He acknowledged Jesus as a "teacher come from God," and gave reasons for so regarding Him. Whatever of feeble faith might have been stirring in the heart of the man, such was founded on the evidence of miracles, supported mainly by the psychological effect of signs and wonders. We must accord him credit for sincerity and honesty of purpose.

Without waiting for specific questions, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus appears to have been puzzled; he asked how such a rejuvenation was possible. "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" We do Nicodemus no injustice in assuming that he as a rabbi, a man learned in the scriptures, ought to have known that there was other meaning in the words of Jesus than that of a mortal, literal birth. Moreover, were it possible that a man could be born a second

^v Note 7, end of chapter.

^w John 3:2; read verses 1-21.

time literally and in the flesh, how could such a birth profit him in spiritual growth? It would be but a reentrance on the stage of physical existence, not an advancement. The man knew that the figure of a new birth was common in the teachings of his day. Every proselyte to Judaism was spoken of at the time of his conversion as one new-born.

The surprise manifested by Nicodemus was probably due, in part at least, to the universality of the requirement as announced by Christ. Were the children of Abraham included? The traditionalism of centuries was opposed to any such view. Pagans had to be born again through a formal acceptance of Judaism, if they would become even small sharers of the blessings that belonged as a heritage to the house of Israel; but Jesus seemed to treat all alike, Jews and Gentiles, heathen idolaters and the people who with their lips at least called Jehovah, God.

Jesus repeated the declaration, and with precision, emphasizing by the impressive "Verily, verily," the greatest lesson that had ever saluted the ears of this ruler in Israel: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That the new birth thus declared to be absolutely essential as a condition of entrance into the kingdom of God, applicable to every man, without limitation or qualification, was a spiritual regeneration, was next explained to the wondering rabbi: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Still the learned Jew pondered yet failed to comprehend. Possibly the sound of the night breeze was heard at that moment; if so, Jesus was but utilizing the incident as a skilful teacher would do to impress a lesson when He continued: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Plainly stated, Nicodemus

was given to understand that his worldly learning and official status availed him nothing in any effort to understand the things of God ; through the physical sense of hearing he knew that the wind blew ; by sight he could be informed of its passage ; yet what did he know of the ultimate cause of even this simple phenomenon ? If Nicodemus would really be instructed in spiritual matters, he had to divest himself of the bias due to his professed knowledge of lesser things.

Rabbi and eminent Sanhedrist though he was, there at the humble lodging of the Teacher from Galilee, he was in the presence of a Master. In the bewilderment of ignorance he asked, "How can these things be ?" The reply must have been humbling if not humiliating to the man : "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things ?" Plainly a knowledge of some of the fundamental principles of the gospel had been before accessible ; Nicodemus was held in reproach for his lack of knowledge, particularly as he was a teacher of the people. Then our Lord graciously expounded at greater length, testifying that He spoke from sure knowledge, based upon what He had seen, while Nicodemus and his fellows were unwilling to accept the witness of His words. Furthermore, Jesus averred His mission to be that of the Messiah, and specifically foretold His death and the manner thereof—that He, the Son of Man, must be lifted up, even as Moses had lifted the serpent in the wilderness as a prototype, whereby Israel might escape the fatal plague.^x

The purpose of the foreappointed death of the Son of Man was : "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" ; for to this end, and out of His boundless love to man had the Father devoted His Only Begotten Son. And further, while it was true that in His mortal advent the Son had not come to sit as a judge, but to teach, persuade and save, nevertheless condemnation

^x Numb. 21:7-9.

would surely follow rejection of that Savior, for light had come, and wicked men avoided the light, hating it in their preference for the darkness in which they hoped to hide their evil deeds. Here again, perhaps, Nicodemus experienced a twinge of conscience, for had not he been afraid to come in the light, and had he not chosen the dark hours for his visit? Our Lord's concluding words combined both instruction and reproof: "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

The narrative of this interview between Nicodemus and the Christ constitutes one of our most instructive and precious scriptures relating to the absolute necessity of unreserved compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel, as the means indispensable to salvation. Faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, through whom alone men may gain eternal life; the forsaking of sin by resolute turning away from the gross darkness of evil to the saving light of righteousness; the unqualified requirement of a new birth through baptism in water, and this of necessity by the mode of immersion, since otherwise the figure of a birth would be meaningless; and the completion of the new birth through baptism by the Spirit—all these principles are taught herein in such simplicity and plainness as to make plausible no man's excuse for ignorance.

If Jesus and Nicodemus were the only persons present at the interview, John, the writer, must have been informed thereof by one of the two. As John was one of the early disciples, afterward one of the apostles, and as he was distinguished in the apostolic company by his close personal companionship with the Lord, it is highly probable that he heard the account from the lips of Jesus. It was evidently John's purpose to record the great lesson of the occasion rather than to tell the circumstantial story. The record begins and ends with equal abruptness; unimportant inci-

dents are omitted; every line is of significance; the writer fully realized the deep import of his subject and treated it accordingly. Later mention of Nicodemus tends to confirm the estimate of the man as he appears in this meeting with Jesus—that of one who was conscious of a belief in the Christ, but whose belief was never developed into such genuine and virile faith as would impel to acceptance and compliance irrespective of cost or consequence.^y

FROM CITY TO COUNTRY.

Leaving Jerusalem, Jesus and His disciples went into the rural parts of Judea, and there tarried, doubtless preaching as opportunity was found or made; and those who believed on Him were baptized.^z The prominent note of His early public utterances was that of His forerunner in the wilderness: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”^a The Baptist continued his labors; though doubtless, since his recognition of the Greater One for whose coming he had been sent to prepare, he considered the baptism he administered as of somewhat different significance. He had at first baptized in preparation for One who was to come; now he baptized repentant believers unto Him who had come.

Disputation had arisen between some of John’s zealous adherents and one or more Jews^b concerning the doctrine of purifying. The context^c leaves little room for doubt that a question was involved as to the relative merits of John’s baptism and that administered by the disciples of Jesus. With excusable ardor and well-intended zeal for their master, the disciples of John, who had been embroiled in the dispute, came to him saying: “Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the

^y Note 8, end of chapter. See “Articles of Faith,” v:1-5.

^z John 3:22; compare 4:2.

^a Matt. 4:17; compare Mark 1:15.

^b Note 9, end of chapter.

^c John 3:25-36.

same baptizeth, and all men come to him." John's supporters were concerned at the success of One whom they regarded in some measure as a rival to their beloved teacher. Had not John given to Jesus His first attestation? "He to whom thou bearest witness" said they, not deigning even to designate Jesus by name. Following the example of Andrew, and of John the future apostle, the people were leaving the Baptist and gathering about the Christ. John's reply to his ardent followers constitutes a sublime instance of self-abnegation. His answer was to this effect: A man receives only as God gives unto him. It is not given to me to do the work of Christ. Ye yourselves are witnesses that I disclaimed being the Christ, and that I said I was one sent before Him. He is as the Bridegroom; I am only as the friend of the bridegroom,^d His servant; and I rejoice greatly in being thus near Him; His voice gives me happiness; and thus my joy is fulfilled. He of whom you speak stands at the beginning of His ministry; I near the end of mine. He must increase but I must decrease. He came from heaven and therefore is superior to all things of earth; nevertheless men refuse to receive His testimony. To such a One, the Spirit of God is not apportioned; it is His in full measure. The Father loveth Him, the Son, and hath given all things into His hand, and: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."^e

In such a reply, under the existent conditions, is to be found the spirit of true greatness, and of a humility that could rest only on a conviction of divine assurance to the Baptist as to himself and the Christ. In more than one sense was John great among all who are born of women.^f He had entered upon his work when sent of God so to do;^g

^d Note 10, end of chapter.

^e John 3:27-36.

^f Matt. 11:11.

^g Luke 3:2,3.

he realized that his work had been in a measure superseded, and he patiently awaited his release, in the meantime continuing in the ministry, directing souls to his Master. The beginning of the end was near. He was soon seized and thrown into a dungeon; where, as shall be shown, he was beheaded to sate the vengeance of a corrupt woman whose sins he had boldly denounced.^h

The Pharisees observed with increasing apprehension the growing popularity of Jesus, evidenced by the fact that even more followed after Him and accepted baptism at the hands of His disciples than had responded to the Baptist's call. Open opposition was threatened; and as Jesus desired to avert the hindrance to His work which such persecution at that time would entail, He withdrew from Judea and retired to Galilee, journeying by way of Samaria. This return to the northern province was effected after the Baptist had been cast into prison.ⁱ

NOTES TO CHAPTER 12.

1. Sea of Galilee.—This, the largest body of fresh water in Palestine, is somewhat pear-shape in outline and measures approximately thirteen miles in extreme length on a northerly-southerly line and between six and seven miles in greatest width. The river Jordan enters it at the northeast extremity and flows out at the south-west; the lake may be regarded, therefore, as a great expansion of the river, though the water-filled depression is about two hundred feet in depth. The outflowing Jordan connects the sea of Galilee with the Dead Sea, the latter a body of intensely saline water, which in its abundance of dissolved salts and in the consequent density of its brine is comparable to the Great Salt Lake in Utah, though the chemical composition of the waters is materially different. The sea of Galilee is referred to by Luke, in accordance with its more appropriate classification, as a lake (Luke 5:1, 2; 8:22, 23, 33). Adjoining the lake on the north-west is a plain, which in earlier times was highly cultivated: this was known as the land of Gennesaret (Matt. 14:34; Mark 6:53); and the water body came to be known as the sea or lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1). From the prominence of one of the cities on its western shore, it was known also as the sea of Tiberias (John 6:1, 23; 21:1). In the Old Testament it is called

^h Matt. 14:3-12.

ⁱ Matt. 4:12.

the sea of Chinnereth (Numb. 34:11) or Chinneroth (Josh. 12:3) after the name of a contiguous city (Josh. 19:35). The surface of the lake or sea is several hundred feet below normal sea-level, 681 feet lower than the Mediterranean according to Zenos, or 700 feet as stated by some others. This low-lying position gives to the region a semi-tropical climate. Zenos, in the *Standard Bible Dictionary*, says: "The waters of the lake are noted for abundant fish. The industry of fishing was accordingly one of the most stable resources of the country round about. . . . Another feature of the sea of Galilee is its susceptibility to sudden storms. These are occasioned partly by its lying so much lower than the surrounding tableland (a fact that creates a difference of temperature and consequent disturbances in the atmosphere), and partly by the rushing of gusts of wind down the Jordan valley from the heights of Hermon. The event recorded in Matt. 8:24 is no extraordinary case. Those who ply boats on the lake are obliged to exercise great care to avoid peril from such storms. The shores of the sea of Galilee as well as the lake itself were the scenes of many of the most remarkable events recorded in the Gospels."

2. The Four Gospels.—All careful students of the New Testament must have observed that the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, treat the events of the Savior's sayings and doings in Galilee with greater fulness than they accord to His work in Judea; the book or Gospel of John, on the other hand, treats particularly the incidents of our Lord's Judean ministry, without excluding, however, important events that occurred in Galilee. In style of writing and method of treatment, the authors of the first three Gospels (evangelists as they and John are collectively styled in theologic literature) differ more markedly from the author of the fourth Gospel than among themselves. The events recorded by the first three can be more readily classified, collated, or arranged, and in consequence the Gospels written by Matthew, Mark, and Luke are now commonly known as the *Synoptics*, or *Synoptic Gospels*.

3. Thirty Years of Age.—According to Luke (3:23) Jesus was about thirty years of age at the time of His baptism, and we find that soon thereafter, He entered publicly upon the work of His ministry. The law provided that at the age of thirty years the Levites were required to enter upon their special service (Numb. 4:3). Clarke, *Bible Commentary*, treating the passage in Luke 3:23, says: "This was the age required by the law to which the priests must arrive before they could be installed in their office." Jesus may possibly have had regard for what had become a custom of the time, in waiting until He had attained that age before entering publicly on the labors of a Teacher among the people. Not being of Levitical descent He was not eligible to priestly ordination in the Aaronic order, and therefore, certainly did not wait for such before beginning His ministry. To have taught in public at an earlier age would have been to arouse criticism, and objection, which might have resulted in serious handicap or hindrance at the outset.

4. Throngs and Confusion at the Passover Festival.—While it is admittedly impossible that even a reasonably large fraction of the Jewish people could be present at the annual Passover gatherings at Jerusalem, and in consequence provision was made for local observance of the feast, the usual attendance at the temple celebration in the days of Jesus was undoubtedly enormous. Josephus calls the Passover throngs "an innumerable multitude" (*Wars*, ii, 1:3), and in another place (*Wars*, vi, 9:3) states that the attendance reached the enormous aggregate of three millions of souls; such is the record, though many modern writers treat the statement as an exaggeration. Josephus says that for the purpose of giving the emperor Nero information as to the numerical strength of the Jewish people, particularly in Palestine, the chief priests were asked by Cestius to count the number of lambs slain at the feast, and the number reported was 256,500, which on the basis of between ten and eleven persons to each paschal table would indicate the presence, he says, of at least 2,700,200, not including visitors other than Jews, and such of the people of Israel as were debarred from participation in the paschal meal because of ceremonial unfitness.

The scenes of confusion, inevitable under the conditions then prevailing, are admirably summarized by Geikie (*Life and Words of Christ*, chap. 30), who cites many earlier authorities for his statements: "The streets were blocked by the crowds from all parts, who had to make their way to the Temple, past flocks of sheep, and droves of cattle, pressing on in the sunken middle part of each street reserved for them, to prevent contact and desecration. Sellers of all possible wares beset the pilgrims, for the great feasts were, as has been said, the harvest time of all trades at Jerusalem, just as, at Mecca, even at this day, the time of the great concourse of worshippers at the tomb of the Prophet, is that of the busiest trade among the merchant pilgrims, who form the caravans from all parts of the Mohammedan world.

"Inside the Temple space, the noise and pressure were, if possible, worse. Directions were posted up to keep to the right or the left, as in the densest thoroughfares of London. The outer court, which others than Jews might enter, and which was, therefore, known as the Court of the Heathen, was in part, covered with pens for sheep, goats, and cattle, for the feast and the thank-offerings. Sellers shouted the merits of their beasts, sheep bleated, and oxen lowed. It was, in fact, the great yearly fair of Jerusalem, and the crowds added to the din and tumult, till the services in the neighboring courts were sadly disturbed. Sellers of doves, for poor women coming for purification from all parts of the country, and for others, had a space set apart for them. Indeed, the sale of doves was, in great measure, secretly, in the hands of the priests themselves: Hannas, the high priest, especially, gaining great profits from his dove cotes on Mount Olivet. The rents of the sheep and cattle pens, and the profits on the doves, had led the priests to sanction the incongruity of thus turning the Temple itself into a noisy market. Nor was this ⁷¹

Potters pressed on the pilgrims their clay dishes and ovens for the Passover lamb; hundreds of traders recommended their wares aloud; shops for wine, oil, salt, and all else needed for sacrifices, invited customers; and, in addition, persons going across the city, with all kinds of burdens, shortened their journey by crossing the Temple grounds. The provision for paying the tribute, levied on all, for the support of the Temple, added to the distraction. On both sides of the east Temple gate, stalls had for generations been permitted for changing foreign money. From the fifteenth of the preceding month money-changers had been allowed to set up their tables in the city, and from the twenty-first,—or twenty days before the Passover,—to ply their trade in the Temple itself. Purchasers of materials for offerings paid the amount at special stalls, to an officer of the Temple, and received a leaden cheque for which they got what they had bought, from the seller. Large sums, moreover, were changed, to be cast, as free offerings, into one of the thirteen chests which formed the Temple treasury. Every Jew, no matter how poor, was, in addition, required to pay yearly a half-shekel—about eighteen pence—as atonement money for his soul, and for the support of the Temple. As this would not be received except in a native coin, called the Temple shekel, which was not generally current, strangers had to change their Roman, Greek, or Eastern money, at the stalls of the money-changers, to get the coin required. The trade gave ready means for fraud, which was only too common. Five per cent. exchange was charged, but this was indefinitely increased by tricks and chicanery, for which the class had everywhere earned so bad a name, that like the publicans, their witness would not be taken before a court."

Touching the matter of the defilement to which the temple courts had been subjected by traffickers acting under priestly license, Farrar, (*Life of Christ*, p. 152), gives us the following: "And this was the entrance-court to the Temple of the Most High! The court which was a witness that that house should be a House of Prayer for all nations had been degraded into a place which, for foulness, was more like shambles, and for bustling commerce more like a densely-crowded bazaar; while the lowing of oxen, the bleating of sheep, the Babel of many languages, the huckstering and wrangling, and the clinking of money and of balances (perhaps not always just), might be heard in the adjoining courts, disturbing the chant of the Levites and the prayers of priests!"

5. The Servility of the Jews in the Presence of Jesus.—The record of the achievement of Jesus, in ridding the temple courts of those who had made the House of the Lord a market place, contains nothing to suggest the inference that He exercised superhuman strength or more than manly vigor. He employed a whip of His own making, and drove all before Him. They fled helter-skelter. None are said to have voiced an objection until the expulsion had been made complete. Why did not some among the multitude object? The submission appears to have

been abject and servile in the extreme. Farrar, (*Life of Christ*, pp. 151, 152) raises the question and answers it with excellent reasoning and in eloquent lines: "Why did not this multitude of ignorant pilgrims resist? Why did these greedy chafferers content themselves with dark scowls and muttered maledictions, while they suffered their oxen and sheep to be chased into the streets and themselves ejected, and their money flung rolling on the floor, by one who was then young and unknown, and in the garb of despised Galilee? Why, in the same way we might ask, did Saul suffer Samuel to beard him in the very presence of his army? Why did David abjectly obey the orders of Joab? Why did Ahab not dare to arrest Elijah at the door of Naboth's vineyard? Because sin is weakness; because there is in the world nothing so abject as a guilty conscience, nothing so invincible as the sweeping tide of a Godlike indignation against all that is base and wrong. How could these paltry sacrilegious buyers and sellers, conscious of wrongdoing, oppose that scathing rebuke, or face the lightnings of those eyes that were enkindled by an outraged holiness? When Phinehas the priest was zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and drove through the bodies of the prince of Simeon and the Midianitish woman with one glorious thrust of his indignant spear, why did not guilty Israel avenge that splendid murder? Why did not every man of the tribe of Simeon become a Goel to the dauntless assassin? Because Vice cannot stand for one moment before Virtue's uplifted arm. Base and grovelling as they were, these money-mongering Jews felt, in all that remnant of their souls which was not yet eaten away by infidelity and avarice, that the Son of Man was right.

"Nay, even the Priests and Pharisees, and Scribes and Levites, devoured as they were by pride and formalism, could not condemn an act which might have been performed by a Nehemiah or a Judas Maccabaeus, and which agreed with all that was purest and best in their traditions. But when they had heard of this deed, or witnessed it, and had time to recover from the breathless mixture of admiration, disgust, and astonishment which it inspired, they came to Jesus, and though they did not dare to condemn what He had done, yet half indignantly asked Him for some sign that He had a right to act thus."

6. Jewish Regard for the Temple.—The Jews professed high regard for the temple. "An utterance of the Savior, construed by the dark-minded as an aspersion upon the temple, was used against Him as one of the chief accusations on which His death was demanded. When the Jews clamored for a sign of His authority He predicted His own death and subsequent resurrection, saying, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' (John 2:19-22; see also Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29). They blindly regarded this remark as a disrespectful allusion to their temple, a structure built by human hands, and they refused to forget or forgive. That this veneration continued after the crucifixion of our Lord is evident from accusations brought against Stephen, and still later against Paul. In their murderous rage the people accused Stephen of disrespect

for the temple, and brought false witnesses who uttered perjured testimony saying, 'This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place.' (Acts 6:13.) And Stephen was numbered with the martyrs. When it was claimed that Paul had brought with him into the temple precincts, a Gentile, the whole city was aroused, and the infuriated mob dragged Paul from the place and sought to kill him. (Acts 21:26-31.)"—The author; *House of the Lord*, pp. 60, 61.

7. Some of the "Chief Rulers" Believed.—Nicodemus was not the only one among the ruling classes who believed in Jesus; but of most of these we learn nothing to indicate that they had sufficient courage to come even by night to make independent and personal inquiry. They feared the result in loss of popularity and standing. We read in John 12:42, 43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Note also the instance of the scribe who proffered to become a professed disciple, but, probably because of some degree of insincerity or unfitness, was rather discouraged than approved by Jesus. (Matt. 8:19, 20.)

8. Nicodemus.—The course followed by this man evidences at once that he really believed in Jesus as one sent of God, and that his belief failed of development into a condition of true faith, which, had it but been realized, might have led to a life of devoted service in the Master's cause. When at a later stage than that of his interview with Christ the chief priests and Pharisees upbraided the officers whom they had sent to take Jesus into custody and who returned to report their failure, Nicodemus, one of the council, ventured to mildly expostulate against the murderous determination of the rulers, by stating a general proposition in interrogative form: "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" He was answered by his colleagues with contempt, and appears to have abandoned his well-intended effort (John 7:50-53; read preceding verses 30-49). We next hear of him bringing a costly contribution of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred-weight, to be used in the burial of Christ's then crucified body; but even in this deed of liberality and devotion, in which his sincerity of purpose cannot well be questioned, he had been preceded by Joseph of Arimathea, a man of rank, who had boldly asked for and secured the body for reverent burial (John 19:38-42). Nevertheless Nicodemus did more than did most of his believing associates among the noble and great ones; and to him let all due credit be given; he will not fail of his reward.

9. "The Jews" or "A Jew."—We read that "there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying" (John 3:25). Bearing in mind that the expression "the Jews" is very commonly used by the author of the fourth Gospel to designate the officials or rulers among the people, the passage quoted may be understood to mean that the Baptist's disciples were engaged in disputation with the priestly rulers.

It is held, however, by Biblical scholars generally, that "the Jews" in this passage is a mistranslation, and that the true rendering is "a Jew." The disputation concerning purifying appears to have arisen between some of the Baptist's followers and a single opponent; and the passage as it appears in the King James version of the Bible is an instance of scripture not translated correctly.

10. Friend of the Bridegroom.—Judean marriage customs in the days of Christ required the appointing of a chief groomsman, who attended to all the preliminaries and made arrangements for the marriage feast, in behalf of the bridegroom. He was distinctively known as the friend of the bridegroom. When the ceremonial requirements had been complied with, and the bride had been legally and formally given unto her spouse, the joy of the bridegroom's friend was fulfilled inasmuch as his appointed duties had been successfully discharged. (John 3:29.) According to Edersheim, (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. I, p. 148), by the simpler customs prevalent in Galilee a "friend of the bridegroom" was not often chosen; and (pp. 663-4) the expression "children of the bridechamber" (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:34, in all of which citations the expression is used by Jesus), was applied collectively to all the invited guests at a wedding festival. He says: "As the institution of 'friends of the bridegroom' prevailed in Judea, but not in Galilee, this marked distinction of the 'friend of the bridegroom' in the mouth of the Judean John, and 'sons (children) of the bridechamber' in that of the Galilean Jesus, is itself evidential of historic accuracy."

11. The Atonement Money.—In the course of the exodus, the Lord required of every male in Israel who was twenty years old or older at the time of a census the payment of a ransom, amounting to half a shekel (Exo. 30:12-16). See pages 383 and 396 herein. As to the use to which this money was to be put, the Lord thus directed Moses: "And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls" (Exo. 30:16; see also 38:25-31). In time, the tax of half a shekel, equivalent to a bekah (Exo. 38:26), was collected annually, though for this exaction no scriptural authority is of record. This tax must not be confused with the redemption money, amounting to five shekels for every firstborn male, the payment of which exempted the individual from service in the labors of the sanctuary. In place of the firstborn sons in all the tribes, the Lord designated the Levites for this special ministry; nevertheless He continued to hold the firstborn males as peculiarly His own, and required the payment of a ransom as a mark of their redemption from the duties of exclusive service. See Exo. 13:2, 13-15; Numb. 3:13, 40-51; 8:15-18; 18:15, 16; also pages 95, 96 herein.

CHAPTER 13.

HONORED BY STRANGERS, REJECTED BY HIS OWN.

JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

The direct route from Judea to Galilee lay through Samaria; but many Jews, particularly Galileans, chose to follow an indirect though longer way rather than traverse the country of a people so despized by them as were the Samaritans. The ill-feeling between Jews and Samaritans had been growing for centuries, and at the time of our Lord's earthly ministry had developed into most intense hatred.^a The inhabitants of Samaria were a mixed people, in whom the blood of Israel was mingled with that of the Assyrians and other nations; and one cause of the animosity existing between them and their neighbors both on the north and the south was the Samaritans' claim for recognition as Israelites; it was their boast that Jacob was their father; but this the Jews denied. The Samaritans had a version of the Pentateuch, which they revered as the law, but they rejected all the prophetical writings of what is now the Old Testament, because they considered themselves treated with insufficient respect therein.

To the orthodox Jew of the time a Samaritan was more unclean than a Gentile of any other nationality. It is interesting to note the extreme and even absurd restrictions then in force in the matter of regulating unavoidable relations between the two peoples. The testimony of a Samaritan could not be heard before a Jewish tribunal. For a Jew to eat food prepared by a Samaritan was at one time regarded by rabbinical authority as an offense as great as that of eating

^a Note 1, end of chapter.

the flesh of swine. While it was admitted that produce from a field in Samaria was not unclean, inasmuch as it sprang directly from the soil, such produce became unclean if subjected to any treatment at Samaritan hands. Thus, grapes and grain might be purchased from Samaritans, but neither wine nor flour manufactured therefrom by Samaritan labor. On one occasion the epithet "Samaritan" was hurled at Christ as an intended insult. "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"^b The Samaritan conception of the mission of the expected Messiah was somewhat better founded than was that of the Jews, for the Samaritans gave greater prominence to the spiritual kingdom the Messiah would establish, and were less exclusive in their views as to whom the Messianic blessings would be extended.

In His journey to Galilee Jesus took the shorter course, through Samaria; and doubtless His choice was guided by purpose, for we read that "He must needs go" that way.^c The road led through or by the town called Sychar,^d "near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph."^e There was Jacob's well, which was held in high esteem, not only for its intrinsic worth as an unfailing source of water, but also because of its association with the great patriarch's life. Jesus, travel-worn and weary, rested at the well, while His disciples went to the town to buy food. A woman came to fill her water-jar, and Jesus said to her: "Give me to drink." By the rules of oriental hospitality then prevailing, a request for water was one that should never be denied if possible to grant; yet the woman hesitated, for she was amazed that a Jew should ask a favor of a Samaritan, however great the need. She expressed her surprize in the question: "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me,

^b John 8:48.

^c John 4:4; for incidents following see verses 5-43.

^d Note 2, end of chapter.

^e Gen. 33:19; and Josh. 24:32.

which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus, seemingly forgetful of thirst in His desire to teach, answered her by saying: "If thou knewst the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman reminded Him that He had no bucket or cord with which to draw from the deep well, and inquired further as to His meaning, adding: "Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?"

Jesus found in the woman's words a spirit similar to that with which the scholarly Nicodemus had received His teachings; each failed alike to perceive the spiritual lesson He would impart. He explained to her that water from the well would be of but temporary benefit; to one who drank of it thirst would return; "But," he added, "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman's interest was keenly aroused, either from curiosity or as an emotion of deeper concern, for she now became the petitioner, and, addressing Him by a title of respect, said: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." She could see nothing beyond the material advantage attaching to water that would once and for all quench thirst. The result of the draught she had in mind would be to give her immunity from one bodily need, and save her the labor of coming to draw from the well.

The subject of the conversation was abruptly changed by Jesus bidding her to go, call her husband, and return. To her reply that she had no husband Jesus revealed to her His superhuman powers of discernment, by telling her she had spoken truthfully, inasmuch as she had had five husbands, while the man with whom she was then living was not her

husband. Surely no ordinary being could have so read the unpleasing story of her life; she impulsively confessed her conviction, saying: "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." She desired to turn the conversation, and, pointing to Mount Gerizim, upon which the sacrilegious priest Manasseh had erected a Samaritan temple, she remarked with little pertinence to what had been said before: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus replied in yet deeper vein, telling her that the time was near when neither that mountain nor Jerusalem would be preeminently a place of worship; and He clearly rebuked her presumption that the traditional belief of the Samaritans was equally good with that of the Jews; for, said He: "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." Changed and corrupted as the Jewish religion had become, it was better than that of her people; for the Jews did accept the prophets, and through Judah the Messiah had come. But, as Jesus expounded the matter to her, the place of worship was of lesser importance than the spirit of the worshiper. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Unable or unwilling to understand Christ's meaning, the woman sought to terminate the lesson by a remark that probably was to her but casual: "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things." Then, to her profound amazement, Jesus rejoined with the awe-inspiring declaration: "I that speak unto thee am he." The language was unequivocal, the assertion one that required no elucidation. The woman must regard Him thereafter as either an imposter or the Messiah. She left her pitcher at the well, and hastening to the town told of her experience, saying: "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

Near the conclusion of the interview between Jesus and

the woman, the returning disciples arrived with the provisions they had gone to procure. They marveled at finding the Master in conversation with a woman, and a Samaritan woman at that, yet none of them asked of Him an explanation. His manner must have impressed them with the seriousness and solemnity of the occasion. When they urged Him to eat He said: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." To them His words had no significance beyond the literal sense, and they queried among themselves as to whether some one had brought Him food during their absence; but He enlightened them in this way: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

A crowd of Samaritans appeared, coming from the city. Looking upon them and upon the grain fields nearby, Jesus continued: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." The import of the saying seems to be that while months would elapse before the wheat and the barley were ready for the sickle, the harvest of souls, exemplified by the approaching crowd, was even then ready; and that from what He had sown the disciples might reap, to their inestimable advantage, since they would have wages for their hire and would gather the fruits of other labor than their own.

Many of the Samaritans believed on Christ, at first on the strength of the woman's testimony, then because of their own conviction; and they said to the woman at whose behest they had at first gone to meet Him: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Graciously He acceded to their request to remain, and tarried with them two days. It is beyond question that Jesus did not share in the national prejudice of the Jews against the people of Samaria; an honest soul was acceptable

to Him come whence he may. Probably the seed sown during this brief stay of our Lord among the despized people of Samaria was that from which so rich a harvest was reaped by the apostles in after years.^f

JESUS AGAIN IN GALILEE: AT CANA AND NAZARETH.

Following the two days' sojourn among the Samaritans, Jesus, accompanied by the disciples who had traveled with Him from Judea, resumed the journey northward into Galilee, from which province He had been absent several months. Realizing that the people of Nazareth, the town in which He had been brought up, would be probably loath to acknowledge Him as other than the carpenter, or, as He stated, knowing that "a prophet hath no honour in his own country,"^g He went first to Cana. The people of that section, and indeed the Galileans generally, received Him gladly; for many of them had attended the last Passover and probably had been personal witnesses of the wonders He had wrought in Judea. While at Cana He was visited by a nobleman, most likely a high official of the province, who entreated Him to proceed to Capernaum and heal his son, who was then lying at the point of death. With the probable design of showing the man the true condition of his mind, for we cannot doubt that Jesus could read his thoughts, our Lord said to him: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."^h As observed in earlier instances, notably in the refusal of Jesus to commit Himself to the professing believers at Jerusalem, whose belief rested solely on their wonder at the things He did,ⁱ our Lord would not regard miracles, though wrought by Himself, as a sufficient and secure foundation for faith. The entreating nobleman, in anguish over the precarious state of his son, in no way

^f Acts 8:5; 9:31; 15:3.

^g John 4:44; compare Matt. 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24.

^h John 4:48; read verses 46-54.

ⁱ John 2:23, 24.

resented the rebuke such as a captious mind may have found in the Lord's reply ; but with sincere humility, which showed his belief that Jesus could heal the boy, he renewed and emphasized his plea : "Sir, come down ere my child die."

Probably the man had never paused to reason as to the direct means or process by which death might be averted and healing be insured through the words of any being ; but in his heart he believed in Christ's power, and with pathetic earnestness besought our Lord to intervene in behalf of his dying son. He seemed to consider it necessary that the Healer be present, and his great fear was that the boy would not live until Jesus could arrive. "Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way ; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." The genuineness of the man's trust is shown by his grateful acceptance of the Lord's assurance, and by the contentment that he forthwith manifested. Capernaum, where his son lay, was about twenty miles away ; had he been still solicitous and doubtful he would probably have tried to return home that day, for it was one o'clock in the afternoon when Jesus spoke the words that had given to him such relief ; but he journeyed leisurely, for on the following day he was still on the road, and was met by some of his servants who had been sent to cheer him with the glad word of his son's recovery. He inquired when the boy had begun to amend, and was told that at the seventh hour on the yesterday the fever had left him. That was the time at which Christ had said, "Thy son liveth." The man's belief ripened fast, and both he and his household accepted the gospel.^j This was the second miracle wrought by Jesus when in Cana, though in this instance the subject of the blessing was in Capernaum.

Our Lord's fame spread through all the region round about. During a period not definitely stated, He taught in the synagogues of the towns and was received with favor.

^j Note 3, end of chapter.

being "glorified of all."^k He then returned to Nazareth, His former home, and, as was His custom, attended the synagog service on the Sabbath day. Many times as boy and man He had sat in that house of worship, listening to the reading of the law and the prophets and to the commentaries or Targums^l relating thereto, as delivered by appointed readers; but now, as a recognized teacher of legal age He was eligible to take the reader's place. On this occasion He stood up to read, when the service had reached the stage at which extracts from the prophetical books were to be read to the congregation. The minister in charge handed Him the roll, or book, of Isaiah; He turned to the part known to us as the beginning of the sixty-first chapter, and read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."^m Handing the book to the minister, He sat down. It was allowable for the reader in the service of the Jewish synagog to make comments in explanation of what had been read; but to do so he must sit. When Jesus took His seat the people knew that He was about to expound the text, and "the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." The scripture He had quoted was one recognized by all classes as specifically referring to the Messiah, for whose coming the nation waited. The first sentence of our Lord's commentary was startling; it involved no labored analysis, no scholastic interpretation, but a direct and unambiguous application: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." There was such graciousness in His words that all wondered, and they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"ⁿ

^k Luke 4:14, 15; read verses 16-32.

^l Note 4, end of chapter.

^m Luke 4:18, 19; compare Isa. 61:1, 2.

ⁿ Luke 4:22; compare Matt. 13:55-57; Mark 6:3; John 6:42.

Jesus knew their thoughts even if He heard not their words, and, forestalling their criticism, He said: "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country." In their hearts the people were eager for a sign, a wonder, a miracle. They knew that Jesus had wrought such in Cana, and a boy in Capernaum had been healed by His word; at Jerusalem too He had astonished the people with mighty works. Were they, His townsmen, to be slighted? Why would He not treat them to some entertaining exhibition of His powers? He continued His address, reminding them that in the days of Elijah, when for three years and a half no rain had fallen, and famine had reigned, the prophet had been sent to but one of the many widows, and she a woman of Sarepta in Sidon, a Gentile, not a daughter of Israel. And again, though there had been many lepers in Israel in the days of Elisha, but one leper, and he a Syrian, not an Israelite, had been cleansed through the prophet's ministration, for Naaman alone had manifested the requisite faith.

Then great was their wrath. Did He dare to class them with Gentiles and lepers? Were they to be likened unto despized unbelievers, and that too by the son of the village carpenter, who had grown from childhood in their community? Victims of diabolical rage, they seized the Lord and took Him to the brow of the hill on the slopes of which the town was built, determined to avenge their wounded feelings by hurling Him from the rocky cliffs. Thus early in His ministry did the forces of opposition attain murderous intensity. But our Lord's time to die had not yet come. The infuriated mob was powerless to go one step farther than their supposed victim would permit. "But he passing through the midst of them went his way." Whether they were overawed by the grace of His presence, silenced by the

power of His words, or stayed by some more appalling intervention, we are not informed. He departed from the unbelieving Nazarenes, and thenceforth Nazareth was no longer His home.

IN CAPERNAUM.

Jesus wended His way to Capernaum,^o which became to Him as nearly a place of abode as any He had in Galilee. There He taught, particularly on Sabbath days; and the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He spoke with authority and power.^p In the synagog, on one of these occasions, was a man who was a victim of possession, and subject to the ravages of an evil spirit, or, as the text so forcefully states, one who "had a spirit of an unclean devil." It is significant that this wicked spirit, which had gained such power over the man as to control his actions and utterances, was terrified before our Lord and cried out with a loud voice, though pleadingly: "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God." Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, commanding him to be silent, and to leave the man; the demon obeyed the Master, and after throwing the victim into violent though harmless paroxysm, left him. Such a miracle caused the beholders to wonder the more, and they exclaimed: "What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about."^q

In the evening of the same day, when the sun had set, and therefore after the Sabbath had passed,^r the people flocked about Him, bringing their afflicted friends and kin-

^o Note 5, end of chapter.

^p Luke 4:32; compare Matt. 7:28, 29; 13:54; Mark 1:22.

^q Luke 4:33-37; and Mark 1:23-28. Note 6, end of chapter.

^r The Jews' Sabbath began at sunset Friday and ended with the setting of the sun on Saturday.

dred ; and these Jesus healed of their divers maladies whether of body or of mind. Among those so relieved were many who had been possessed of devils, and these cried out, testifying perforce of the Master's divine authority : "Thou art Christ the Son of God."^s

On these as on other occasions, we find evil spirits voicing through the mouths of their victims their knowledge that Jesus was the Christ ; and in all such instances the Lord silenced them with a word ; for He wanted no such testimony as theirs to attest the fact of His Godship. Those spirits were of the devil's following, members of the rebellious and defeated hosts that had been cast down through the power of the very Being whose authority and power they now acknowledged in their demoniac frenzy. Together with Satan himself, their vanquished chief, they remained unembodied, for to all of them the privileges of the second or mortal estate had been denied ;^t their remembrance of the scenes that had culminated in their expulsion from heaven was quickened by the presence of the Christ, though He stood in a body of flesh.

Many modern writers have attempted to explain the phenomenon of demoniacal possession ; and beside these there are not a few who deny the possibility of actual domination of the victim by spirit personages. Yet the scriptures are explicit in showing the contrary. Our Lord distinguished between this form of affliction and that of simple bodily disease in His instructions to the Twelve : "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils."^u In the account of the incidents under consideration, the evangelist Mark observes the same distinction, thus : "They brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils." In several instances, Christ, in rebuking demons, addressed them as individuals distinct from

^s Luke 4:41; compare Mark 1:34; 3:11, 12; 5:1-18; Matt. 8:28-34.

^t Pages 6, 7.

^u Matt. 10:8; see verse 1; compare 4:24; Mark 1:32; 16:17, 18; Luke 9:1

the human being afflicted,^v and in one such instance commanded the demon to "come out of him, and enter no more into him."^w

In this matter as in others the simplest explanation is the pertinent truth; theory raised on other than scriptural foundation is unstable. Christ unequivocally associated demons with Satan, specifically in His comment on the report of the Seventy whom He authorized and sent forth, and who testified with joy on their return that even the devils had been subject unto them through His name; and to those faithful servants He said: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."^x The demons that take possession of men, overruling their agency and compelling them to obey Satanic bidding, are the unembodied angels of the devil, whose triumph it is to afflict mortals, and if possible to impel them to sin. To gain for themselves the transitory gratification of tenanting a body of flesh, these demons are eager to enter even into the bodies of beasts.^y

Possibly it was during the interval between the rebuking of the evil spirit in the synagog and the miracles of healing and casting out devils in the evening of that Sabbath, that Jesus went to the house of Simon, whom He had before named Peter, and there found the mother-in-law of His disciple lying ill of fever. Acceding to the request of faith He rebuked the disease; the woman was healed forthwith, rose from her bed, and ministered the hospitality of her home unto Jesus and those who were with Him.^z

NOTES TO CHAPTER 13.

1. Animosity Between Jews and Samaritans.—In any consideration of the Samaritans, it must be kept in mind that a certain city and the district or province in which it was situated were both known as Samaria. The principal facts pertaining to

^v Matt. 8:32; Mark 1:25; Luke 4:35.

^w Mark 9:25.

^x Luke 10:17, 18; compare Rev. 12:7-9.

^y Matt. 8:29-33; Mark 5:11-14; Luke 8:32-34.

^z Matt. 8:14, 15; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38, 39.

the origin of the Samaritans and the explanation of the mutual animosity existing between that people and the Jews in the time of Christ, have been admirably summarized by Geikie (*Life and Words of Christ*, vol. i, pp. 495-6). Omitting his citation of authorities, we quote: "After the deportation of the Ten Tribes to Assyria, Samaria had been repeopled by heathen colonists from various provinces of the Assyrian empire, by fugitives from the authorities of Judea, and by stragglers of one or other of the Ten Tribes, who found their way home again. The first heathen settlers, terrified at the increase of wild animals, especially lions, and attributing it to their not knowing the proper worship of the God of the country, sent for one of the exiled priests, and, under his instructions, added the worship of Jehovah to that of their idols—an incident in their history from which later Jewish hatred and derision taunted them as 'proselytes of the lions,' as it branded them, from their Assyrian origin, with the name of Cuthites. Ultimately, however, they became even more rigidly attached to the Law of Moses than the Jews themselves. Anxious to be recognized as Israelites, they set their hearts on joining the Two Tribes, on their return from captivity, but the stern puritanism of Ezra and Nehemiah admitted no alliance between the pure blood of Jerusalem and the tainted race of the north. Resentment at this affront was natural, and excited resentment in return, till, in Christ's day, centuries of strife and mutual injury, intensified by theological hatred on both sides, had made them implacable enemies. The Samaritans had built a temple on Mount Gerizim, to rival that of Jerusalem, but it had been destroyed by John Hyrcanus, who had also levelled Samaria to the ground. They claimed for their mountain a greater holiness than that of Moriah; accused the Jews of adding to the word of God, by receiving the writings of the prophets, and prided themselves on owning only the Pentateuch as inspired; favoured Herod because the Jews hated him, and were loyal to him and the equally hated Romans; had kindled false lights on the hills, to vitiate the Jewish reckoning by the new moons, and thus throw their feasts into confusion, and, in the early youth of Jesus, had even defiled the very Temple itself, by strewing human bones in it, at the Passover.

"Nor had hatred slumbered on the side of the Jews. They knew the Samaritans only as Cuthites, or heathens from Cuth. 'The race that I hate is no race,' says the son of Sirach. It was held that a people who once had worshipped five gods could have no part in Jehovah. The claim of the Samaritans that Moses had buried the Tabernacle and its vessels on the top of Gerizim, was laughed to scorn. It was said that they had dedicated their temple, under Antiochus Epiphanes, to the Greek Jupiter. Their keeping the commands of Moses even more strictly than the Jews, that it might seem they were really of Israel, was not denied; but their heathenism, it was said, had been proved by the discovery of a brazen dove, which they worshipped, on the top of Gerizim. It would have been enough that they boasted of Herod as their good king, who had married a daughter of their people; that he had been free to follow, in

their country, his Roman tastes, so hated in Judea; that they had remained quiet, after his death, when Judea and Galilee were in uproar, and that for their peacefulness a fourth of their taxes had been remitted and added to the burdens of Judea. Their friendliness to the Romans was an additional provocation. While the Jews were kept quiet only by the sternest severity, and strove to the utmost against the introduction of anything foreign, the Samaritans rejoiced in the new importance which their loyalty to the empire had given them. Shechem flourished: close by, in Cæsarea, the procurator held his court: a division of cavalry, in barracks at Sebaste—the old Samaria—had been raised in the territory. The Roman strangers were more than welcome to while away the summer in their umbrageous valleys.

"The illimitable hatred, rising from so many sources, found vent in the tradition that a special curse had been uttered against the Samaritans, by Ezra, Zerubbabel, and Joshua. It was said that these great ones assembled the whole congregation of Israel in the Temple, and that three hundred priests, with three hundred trumpets, and three hundred books of the Law, and three hundred scholars of the Law, had been employed to repeat, amidst the most solemn ceremonial, all the curses of the Law against the Samaritans. They had been subjected to every form of excommunication; by the incommunicable name of Jehovah; by the Tables of the Law, and by the heavenly and earthly synagogues. The very name became a reproach. 'We know that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil,' said the Jews, to Jesus, in Jerusalem. A Samaritan egg, as the hen laid it, could not be unclean, but what of a boiled egg? Yet interest and convenience strove, by subtle casuistry, to invent excuses for what intercourse was unavoidable. The country of the Cuthites was clean, so that a Jew might, without scruple, gather and eat its produce. The waters of Samaria were clean, so that a Jew might drink them or wash in them. Their dwellings were clean, so that he might enter them, and eat or lodge in them. Their roads were clean, so that the dust of them did not defile a Jew's feet. The Rabbis even went so far in their contradictory utterances, as to say that the victuals of the Cuthites were allowed, if none of their wine or vinegar were mixed with them, and even their unleavened bread was to be reckoned fit for use at the Passover. Opinions thus wavered, but, as a rule, harsher feeling prevailed."

That the hostile sentiment has continued unto this day, at least on the part of the Jews, is affirmed by Frankl and others. Thus, as quoted by Farrar (p. 166 note): " 'Are you a Jew?' asked Salameh Cohen, the Samaritan high priest, of Dr. Frankl; 'and do you come to us, the Samaritans, who are despised by the Jews?' (*Jews in the East*, ii, 329). He added that they would willingly live in friendship with the Jews, but that the Jews avoided all intercourse with them. Soon after, visiting Sephardish Jews of Nablous, Dr. Frankl asked one of that sect, 'if he had any intercourse with the Samaritans?' The women retreated with a cry of horror, and one of them said, 'Have you been

among the worshipers of the pigeons?" I said that I had. The women again fell back with the same expression of repugnance and one of them said, "Take a purifying bath!" (idem, p. 334). Canon Farrar adds, "I had the pleasure of spending a day among the Samaritans encamped on Mount Gerizim, for their annual passover, and neither in their habits nor apparent character could I see any cause for all this horror and hatred."

2. Sychar.—The town where dwelt the Samaritan woman with whom Jesus conversed at Jacob's well, is named Sychar in John 4:5; the name occurs nowhere else in the Bible. Attempts have been made to identify the place with Shechem, a city dear to the Jewish heart because of its prominence in connection with the lives of the early patriarchs. It is now generally admitted, however, that Sychar was a small village on the site of the present Askar, which is, says Zenos, "a village with a spring and some ancient rock-hewn tombs, about five eighths of a mile north of Jacob's well."

3. The Nobleman of Capernaum.—The name of the nobleman whose son was healed by the word of Jesus is not given. Attempts to identify him with Chuza, the steward of Herod Antipas, are based on unreliable tradition. The family of the nobleman accepted the teachings of Christ. "Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward" (Luke 8:3) was among the grateful and honorable women who had been recipients of our Lord's healing ministry, and who contributed of their substance for the furtherance of His work. Unconfirmed tradition should not be confounded with authentic history.

4. The Targums are ancient Jewish paraphrases on the scriptures, which were delivered in the synagogues in the languages of the common people. In the time of Christ the language spoken by the Jews was not Hebrew, but an Aramaic dialect. Edersheim states that pure Hebrew was the language of scholars and of the synagog, and that the public readings from the scriptures had to be rendered by an interpreter. "In earliest times indeed," says he, "it was forbidden to the Methurgeman [interpreter] to read his translation, or to write down a Targum, lest the paraphrase should be regarded as of equal authority with the original." The use of written targums was "authoritatively sanctioned before the end of the second century after Christ. This is the origin of our two oldest extant Targumim—that of Onkelos (as it is called) on the Pentateuch; and that on the Prophets, attributed to Jonathan the son of Uzziel. These names do not indeed, accurately represent the authorship of the oldest Targumim, which may more correctly be regarded as later and authoritative recensions of what, in some form, had existed before. But although these works had their origin in Palestine, it is noteworthy that in the form in which at present we possess them, they are the outcome of the schools of Babylon." (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i, pp. 10, 11.)

5. Capernaum.—"The name Capernaum signifies, according to some authorities, 'the Village of Nahum,' according to others, 'the Village of Consolation.' As we follow the history of Jesus

we shall discover that many of His mighty works were wrought, and many of His most impressive words were spoken in Capernaum. The infidelity of the inhabitants, after all the discourses and wonderful works which He had done among them, brought out the saying of Jesus, 'And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be cast down to hell.' (Matt. 11:23.) So thoroughly has this prediction been fulfilled that no trace of the city remains, and the very site which it occupied is now a matter of conjecture, there being even no ecclesiastical tradition of the locality. At the present day two spots have claims which are urged, each with such arguments of probability as to make the whole question the most difficult in sacred topography. . . .

. . . We shall probably never be able to know the exact fact. Jesus damned it to oblivion, and there it lies. We shall content ourselves with the New Testament notices as bearing on the work of Jesus.

"We learn that it was somewhere on the borders of Zabulon and Nephtali, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, (compare Matt. 4:13, with John 6:24). It was near or in 'the land of Gennesaret' (compare Matt. 14:34, with John 6:17, 21, 24), a plain about three miles long and one mile wide, which we learn from Josephus was one of the most prosperous and crowded districts of Palestine. It was probably on the great road leading from Damascus to the south, 'by the way of the sea.' (Matt. 4:15.) There was great wisdom in selecting this as a place to open a great public ministry. It was full of a busy population. The exceeding richness of the wonderful plain of Gennesaret supported the mass of inhabitants it attracted. Josephus (B. J., iii, 10:8) gives a glowing description of this land."—Deems *Light of the Nations*, pp. 167, 168.

6. Knowledge Does Not Insure Salvation.—James of old chided his brethren for certain empty professions (James 2:19). Said he in effect: You take pride and satisfaction in declaring your belief in God; you boast of being distinguished from the idolaters and the heathen because you accept one God; you do well to so profess, and so believe; but, remember, others do likewise; even the devils believe; and, we may add, so firmly that they tremble at thought of the fate which that belief makes sure. Those confessions of the devils, that Christ was the Son of God, were founded on knowledge; yet their knowledge of the great truth did not change their evil natures. How different was their acknowledgment of the Savior from that of Peter, who, to the Master's question "Whom say ye that I am?" replied in practically the words used by the unclean spirits before cited, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:15-16; see also Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20). Peter's faith had already shown its vital power: it had caused him to forsake much that had been dear, to follow his Lord through persecution and suffering, and to put away worldliness with all its fascinations, for the sacrificing godliness which his faith made so desirable. His knowledge of God as the Father, and of the Son as the Redeemer, was perhaps no greater than that of the unclean spirits; but while to them that knowledge was but an added cause of condemnation, to him it was a means of salvation.—Abridged from *The Articles of Faith*.

CHAPTER 14.

CONTINUATION OF OUR LORD'S MINISTRY IN
GALILEE.

A LEPER MADE CLEAN.

Early in the morning following that eventful Sabbath in Capernaum, our Lord arose “a great while before day” and went in quest of seclusion beyond the town. In a solitary place He gave Himself to prayer, thus demonstrating the fact that, Messiah though He was, He was profoundly conscious of His dependence upon the Father, whose work He had come to do. Simon Peter and other disciples found the place of His retirement, and told Him of the eager crowds who sought Him. Soon the people gathered about Him, and urged that He remain with them; but “he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.”^a And to the disciples He said: “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.”^b Thence He departed, accompanied by the few whom He had already closely associated with Himself, and ministered in many towns of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues, healing the sick, and casting out devils.

Among the afflicted seeking the aid that He alone could give came a leper,^c who knelt before Him, or bowed with his face to the ground, and humbly professed his faith, saying: “If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” The petition implied in the words of this poor creature was pathetic; the confidence he expressed is inspiring. The question in his mind was not—Can Jesus heal me? but—Will He heal me?

^a Luke 4:42-44.

^b Mark 1:38.

^c Mark 1:40-45; Matt. 8:2-4; Luke 5:12-15.

In compassionate mercy Jesus laid His hand upon the sufferer, unclean though he was, both ceremonially and physically, for leprosy is a loathsome affliction, and we know that this man was far advanced in the disease since we are told that he was "full of leprosy." Then the Lord said: "I will: be thou clean." The leper was immediately healed. Jesus instructed him to show himself to the priest, and make the offerings prescribed in the law of Moses for such cases as his.^d

In this instruction we see that Christ had not come to destroy the law, but, as He affirmed at another time, to fulfil it;^e and at this stage of His work the fulfilment was incomplete. Moreover, had the legal requirements been disregarded in as serious a matter as that of restoring an outcast leper to the society of the community from which he had been debarred, priestly opposition, already waxing strong and threatening against Jesus, would have been augmented, and further hindrance to the Lord's work might have resulted. There was to be no delay in the man's compliance with the Master's instruction; Jesus "straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away." Furthermore He explicitly directed the man to tell nobody of the manner of his healing. There was perhaps good reason for this injunction of silence, aside from the very general course of our Lord in discouraging undesirable notoriety; for, had word of the miracle preceded the man's appearing before the priest, obstacles might have been thrown in the way of his Levitical recognition as one who was clean. The man, however, could not keep the good word to himself, but went about "and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter."^f

^d Lev. 14:2-10. Note 1, end of chapter.

^e Matt. 5:17.

^f Mark 1:45.

A PALSIED MAN HEALED AND FORGIVEN.

It must be borne in mind that no one of the evangelists attempts to give a detailed history of all the doings of Jesus, nor do all follow the same order in relating the incidents with which they associate the great lessons of the Master's teachings. There is much uncertainty as to the actual sequence of events.

"Some days" after the healing of the leper, Jesus was again in Capernaum. The details of His employment during the interval are not specified; but, we may be sure that His work continued, for His characteristic occupation was that of going about doing good.^g His place of abode in Capernaum was well known, and word was soon noised about that He was in the house.^h A great throng gathered, so that there was no room to receive them; even the doorway was crowded, and later comers could not get near the Master. To all who were within hearing Jesus preached the gospel. A little party of four approached the house bearing a litter or pallet on which lay a man afflicted with palsy, a species of paralysis which deprived the subject of the power of voluntary motion and usually of speech; the man was helpless. His friends, disappointed at finding themselves unable to reach Jesus because of the press, resorted to an unusual expedient, which exhibited in an unmistakable way their faith in the Lord as One who could rebuke and stay disease, and their determination to seek the desired blessing at His hands.

By some means they carried the afflicted man to the flat roof of the house, probably by an outside stairway or by the use of a ladder, possibly by entering an adjoining house, ascending the stairs to its roof and crossing therefrom to the house within which Jesus was teaching. They broke away part of the roof, making an opening, or enlarging that of the

^g Acts 10:38.

^h Mark 2:1-12; compare Matt. 9:2-8; Luke 5:17-24.

trapdoor such as the houses of that place and time were usually provided with; and, to the surprize of the assembled crowd, they then let down through the tiling the portable couch upon which the palsied sufferer lay. Jesus was deeply impressed by the faith and worksⁱ of those who had thus labored to place a helpless瘫痪 before Him; doubtless, too, He knew of the trusting faith in the heart of the sufferer; and, looking compassionately upon the man, He said: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

Among the people there assembled were scribes, Pharisees, and doctors of the law, not only representatives of the local synagogue but some who had come from distant towns in Galilee, and some from Judea, and even from Jerusalem. The official class had opposed our Lord and His works on earlier occasions, and their presence in the house at this time boded further unfriendly criticism and possible obstruction. They heard the words spoken to the瘫痪, and were angered thereat. In their hearts they accused Jesus of the awful offense of blasphemy, which consists essentially in claiming for human or demon power the prerogatives of God, or in dishonoring God by ascribing to Him attributes short of perfection.^j These unbelieving scholars, who incessantly wrote and talked of the coming of the Messiah, yet rejected Him when He was there present, murmured in silence, saying to themselves: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" Jesus knew their inmost thoughts,^k and made reply thereto, saying: "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" And then to emphasize, and to put beyond question His possession of divine authority, He added: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to for-

ⁱ Compare James 2:14-18.

^j Note 2, end of chapter.

^k See another instance of our Lord reading unuttered thoughts, Luke 7:39-50.

give sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." The man arose, fully restored; and, taking up the mattress upon which he had been brought, walked out before them. The amazement of the people was mingled with reverence, and many glorified God, of whose power they were witnesses.

The incident demands our further study. According to one of the accounts, the Lord's first words to the afflicted one were: "Son, be of good cheer;" followed directly by the comforting and authoritative assurance: "Thy sins be forgiven thee."^l The man was probably in a state of fear; he may have known that his ailment was the result of wicked indulgences; nevertheless, though he may have considered the possibility of hearing only condemnation for his transgression, he had faith to be brought. In this man's condition there was plainly a close connection between his past sins and his present affliction; and in this particular his case is not unique, for we read that Christ admonished another, whom He healed, to sin no more lest a worse thing befall him.^m We are not warranted, however, in assuming that all bodily ills are the result of culpable sin; and against such a conception stands the Lord's combined instruction and rebuke to those who, in the case of a man born blind, asked who had sinned, the man or his parents to bring so grievous an affliction upon him, to which inquiry our Lord replied that the man's blindness was due neither to his own sin nor to that of his parents.ⁿ

In many instances, however, disease is the direct result of individual sin. Whatever may have been the measure of past offense on the part of the man suffering from palsy, Christ recognized his repentance together with the faith that accompanied it, and it was the Lord's rightful prerogative

^l Matt. 9:2. Note 5, end of chapter.

^m John 5:14. Page 208.

ⁿ John 9:1-3.

to decide upon the man's fitness to receive remission of his sins and relief from his bodily affliction. The interrogative response of Jesus to the unuttered criticism of the scribes, Pharisees, and doctors, has been interpreted in many ways. He inquired which was easier, to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," or to say, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk." Is it not a rational explanation that, when spoken authoritatively by Him, the two expressions were of allied meaning? The circumstance should have been a sufficient demonstration to all who heard, that He, the Son of Man, claimed and possessed the right and the power to remit both physical and spiritual penalties, to heal the body of visible disease, and to purge the spirit of the no less real malady of sin. In the presence of people of all classes Jesus thus openly asserted His divinity, and affirmed the same by a miraculous manifestation of power.

The charge of blasphemy, which the rabbinical critics formulated in their minds against the Christ, was not to end as a mental conception of theirs, nor to be nullified by our Lord's later remarks. It was through perjured testimony that He finally received unrighteous condemnation and was sent to His death.^o Already, in that house at Caper-naum, the shadow of the cross had fallen athwart the course of His life.

PUBLICANS AND SINNERS.

From the house Jesus repaired to the seaside, whither the people followed Him; there He taught them again. At the close of His discourse He walked farther and saw a man named Levi, one of the publicans^p or official collectors of taxes, sitting at the custom-house where the tariff levied under Roman law had to be paid. This man was known also as Matthew, a name less distinctively Jewish than is

^o Compare John 10:33, and 5:18; Matt. 26:65, 66.

^p Note 3, end of chapter.

Levi.^q He afterward became one of the Twelve and the author of the first of the evangelical Gospels. To him Jesus said, "Follow me." Matthew left his place and followed the Lord. Some time later the new disciple provided a great feast at his house, in honor of the Master; and other disciples were present. So obnoxious to the Jews was the power of Rome to which they were subject, that they regarded with aversion all officials in Roman employ. Particularly humiliating to them was the system of compulsory taxation, by which they, the people of Israel, had to pay tribute to an alien nation, which in their estimation was wholly pagan and heathen.

Naturally, the collectors of these taxes were abhorred; and they, known as publicans, probably resented the discourteous treatment by inconsiderate enforcement of the tax requirements, and, as affirmed by historians, often inflicted unlawful extortion upon the people. If publicans in general were detested, we can readily understand how bitter would be the contempt in which the Jews would hold one of their own nation who had accepted appointment as such an official. In this unenviable status was Matthew when Jesus called him. The publicans formed a distinct social class, for from the community in general they were practically ostracized. All who associated with them were made to share in the popular odium, and "publicans and sinners" became a common designation for the degraded caste. To Matthew's feast many of his friends and some of his fellow officials were invited, so that the gathering was largely made up of these despized "publicans and sinners." And to such an assemblage went Jesus with His disciples.

The scribes and Pharisees could not let pass such an opportunity for faultfinding and caustic criticism. They hesitated to address themselves directly to Jesus, but of the disciples they asked in disdain: "Why eateth your Master

^q Matt. 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32.

with publicans and sinners?" The Master heard, and replied with edifying incisiveness mingled with splendid irony. Citing one of the common aphorisms of the day, He said: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." To this He added: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The hypercritical Pharisees were left to make their own application of the rejoinder, which some may have understood to mean that their self-righteousness was arraigned and their claims to superiority derided. Aside from the veiled sarcasm in the Master's words, they ought to have perceived the wisdom enshrined in His answer and to have profited thereby. Is not the physician's place among the afflicted ones? Would he be justified in keeping aloof from the sick and the suffering? His profession is that of combating disease, preventing when possible, curing when necessary, to the full extent of his ability. If the festive assembly at Matthew's house really did comprise a number of sinners, was not the occasion one of rare opportunity for the ministrations of the Physician of Souls? The righteous need no call to repentance; but are the sinners to be left in sin, because those who profess to be spiritual teachers will not condescend to extend a helping hand?

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

Shortly after the entertainment provided by Matthew, the Pharisees were ready with another criticism, and in this they were associated with some of the Baptist's adherents. John was in prison; but many of those who had been drawn to his baptism, and had professed discipleship to him, still clung to his teachings, and failed to see that the Greater One of whom he had testified was then ministering amongst them. The Baptist had been a scrupulous observer of the law; his strict asceticism vied with the rigor of Pharisaic profession.

His non-progressive disciples, now left without a leader, naturally fell in with the Pharisees. Some of John's disciples came to Jesus, and questioned Him concerning His seeming indifference in the matter of fasting. They propounded a plain question: "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?"^r To the friends of the now imprisoned Baptist our Lord's reply must have brought memories of their beloved leader's words, when he had compared himself to the Bridegroom's friend, and had plainly told them who was the real Bridegroom.^s "Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days."^t

If the questioners were able to comprehend the true import of this reply, they could not fail to find therein an implied abrogation of purely ceremonial observances comprised in the code of rabbinical rules and the numerous traditions associated with the law. But to make the subject clearer to their biased minds, Jesus gave them illustrations, which may be classed as parabolic. "No man also," said He, "seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles."^u

In such wise did our Lord proclaim the newness and completeness of His gospel. It was in no sense a patching up of Judaism. He had not come to mend old and torn garments; the cloth He provided was new, and to sew it on

^r Mark 2:18-22; Matt. 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39.

^s Page 164.

^t Mark 2:19, 20.

^u Mark 2:21, 22.

the old would be but to tear afresh the threadbare fabric and leave a more unsightly rent than at first. Or to change the figure, new wine could not safely be entrusted to old bottles. The bottles here referred to were really bags, made of the skins of animals, and of course they deteriorated with age. Just as old leather splits or tears under even slight strain, so the old bottle-skins would burst from the pressure of fermenting juice, and the good wine would be lost. The gospel taught by Christ was a new revelation, superseding the past, and marking the fulfilment of the law; it was no mere addendum, nor was it a reenactment of past requirements; it embodied a new and an everlasting covenant. Attempts to patch the Judaistic robe of traditionalism with the new fabric of the covenant could result in nothing more slightly than a rending of the fabric. The new wine of the gospel could not be held in the old time-worn containers of Mosaic libations. Judaism would be belittled and Christianity perverted by any such incongruous association.^v

FISHERS OF MEN.

It is improbable that the disciples who followed Jesus in the early months of His ministry had remained with Him continuously down to the time now under consideration. We find that some of those who were later called to the apostleship were following their vocation as fishermen even while Jesus was actively engaged as a Teacher in their own neighborhood. One day, as the Lord stood by the lake or sea of Galilee, the people pressed about Him in great numbers, eager to hear more of the wondrous words He was wont to speak.^w Near the place were two fishing boats drawn in upon the beach; the owners were close by, washing and mending their nets. One of the boats belonged to Simon Peter, who had already become identified with the Master's

^v See "The Great Apostasy" 7:5.

^w Luke 5:1-11; compare Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20.

work; this boat Jesus entered, and then asked Simon to thrust out a little from the land. Seating Himself, as teachers of that time usually did in delivering discourses, the Lord preached from this floating pulpit to the multitude on shore. The subject of the address is not given us.

When the sermon was ended, Jesus directed Simon to launch out into deep water and then let down the nets for a draught. Presumably Andrew was with his brother and possibly other assistants were in the boat. Simon replied to Jesus: "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." It was soon filled with fishes; so great was the haul that the net began to break, and the busy fishermen signalled to those in the other boat to come to their assistance. The catch filled both boats so that they appeared to be in danger of sinking. Simon Peter was overcome with this new evidence of the Master's power, and, falling at the feet of Jesus, he exclaimed: "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Jesus answered graciously and with promise: "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men."^x The occupants of the second boat were Zebedee and his two sons James and John, the last named being he who with Andrew had left the Baptist to follow Jesus at the Jordan.^y Zebedee and his sons were partners with Simon in the fishing business. When the two boats were brought to land, the brothers Simon and Andrew, and Zebedee's two sons James and John, left their boats and accompanied Jesus.

The foregoing treatment is based on Luke's record; the briefer and less circumstantial accounts given by Matthew and Mark omit the incident of the miraculous draught of fishes, and emphasize the calling of the fishermen. To Simon and Andrew Jesus said: "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." The contrast thus

^x Note 4, end of chapter.

^y Page 140.

presented between their former vocation and their new calling is strikingly forceful. Theretofore they had caught fish, and the fate of the fish was death; thereafter they were to draw men—to a life eternal. To James and John the call was no less definite; and they too left their all to follow the Master.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 14.

1. Leprosy.—In Biblical usage this name is applied to several diseases, all, however having some symptoms in common, at least in the earlier stages of the malady. The real leprosy is a scourge and a plague in many oriental lands to-day. Zenos, in *Standard Bible Dict.*, says: “True leprosy, as known in modern times, is an affection characterized by the appearance of nodules in the eye-brows, the cheeks, the nose, and the lobes of the ears, also in the hands and feet, where the disease eats into the joints, causing the falling off of fingers and toes. If nodules do not appear, their place is taken by spots of blanched or discolored skin (Muscular leprosy). Both forms are based upon a functional degeneration of the nerves of the skin. Its cause was discovered by Hansen in 1871 to be a specific bacillus. Defective diet, however, seems to serve as a favorable condition for the culture of the bacillus. Leprosy was one of the few abnormal conditions of the body which the Levitical law declared unclean. Elaborate provision was therefore made for testing its existence and for the purification of those who were cured of it.”

Deems, *Light of the Nations*, p. 185, summing up the conditions incident to the advanced stages of the dread disease, writes: “The symptoms and the effects of this disease are very loathsome. There comes a white swelling or scab, with a change of the color of the hair on the part from its natural hue to yellow; then the appearance of a taint going deeper than the skin, or raw flesh appearing in the swelling. Then it spreads and attacks the cartilaginous portions of the body. The nails loosen and drop off, the gums are absorbed, and the teeth decay and fall out; the breath is a stench, the nose decays; fingers, hands, feet, may be lost, or the eyes eaten out. The human beauty has gone into corruption, and the patient feels that he is being eaten as by a fiend, who consumes him slowly in a long remorseless meal that will not end until he be destroyed. He is shut out from his fellows. As they approach he must cry, ‘Unclean! unclean!’ that all humanity may be warned from his precincts. He must abandon wife and child. He must go to live with other lepers, in disheartening view of miseries similar to his own. He must dwell in dismantled houses or in the tombs. He is, as Trench says, a dreadful parable of death. By the laws of Moses (Lev. 13:45; Numb. 6:9; Ezek. 24:17) he was compelled, as if he were mourn-

ing for his own decease, to bear about him the emblems of death, the rent garments; he was to keep his head bare and his lip covered, as was the custom with those who were in communion with the dead. When the Crusaders brought the leprosy from the East, it was usual to clothe the leper in a shroud, and to say for him the masses for the dead. . . . In all ages this indescribably horrible malady has been considered incurable. The Jews believed that it was inflicted by Jehovah directly, as a punishment for some extraordinary perversity or some transcendent act of sinfulness, and that only God could heal it. When Naaman was cured, and his flesh came back like that of a little child, he said, 'Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.' (2 Kings 5:14, 15.)"

The fact that leprosy is not ordinarily communicable by mere outward contact is accentuated by Trench, *Notes on the Miracles*, pp. 165-168, and the isolation of lepers required by the Mosaic law is regarded by him as an intended object lesson and figure to illustrate spiritual uncleanness. He says: "I refer to the mistaken assumption that leprosy was catching from one person to another; and that the lepers were so carefully secluded from their fellowmen lest they might communicate the disease to others, as in like manner that the torn garment, the covered lip, the cry, 'Unclean, unclean' (Lev. 13:45) were warnings to all that they should keep aloof, lest unawares touching a leper, or drawing unto too great a nearness, they should become partakers of this disease. So far from any danger of the kind existing, nearly all who have looked closest into the matter agree that the sickness was incommunicable by ordinary contact from one person to another. A leper might transmit it to his children, or the mother of a leper's children might take it from him; but it was by no ordinary contact communicable from one person to another. All the notices in the Old Testament, as well as in other Jewish books, confirm the statement that we have here something very much higher than a mere sanitary regulation. Thus, when the law of Moses was not observed, no such exclusion necessarily found place; Naaman the leper commanded the armies of Syria (2 Kings 5:1); Gehazi, with his leprosy that never should be cleansed, (2 Kings 5:27) talked familiarly with the king of apostate Israel (2 Kings 8:5). . . . How, moreover, should the Levitical priests, had the disease been this creeping infection, have ever themselves escaped it, obliged as they were by their very office to submit the leper to actual handling and closest examination? . . . Leprosy was nothing short of a living death, a corrupting of all the humors, a poisoning of the very springs, of life; a dissolution, little by little, of the whole body, so that one limb after another actually decayed and fell away. Aaron exactly describes the appearance which the leper presented to the eyes of the beholders, when, pleading for Miriam, he says, 'Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.' (Numb. 12:12.) The disease, moreover, was incurable by the art and skill of man; not that the leper might not return to health; for, however rare,

such cases are contemplated in the Levitical law. . . . The leper, thus fearfully bearing about the body the outward and visible tokens of sin in the soul, was treated throughout as a sinner, as one in whom sin had reached its climax, as one dead in trespasses and sins. He was himself a dreadful parable of death. He bore about him the emblems of death (Lev. 13:45); the rent garments, mourning for himself as one dead; the head bare as they were wont to have it who were defiled by communion with the dead (Numb. 6:9; Ezek. 24:27); and the lip covered (Ezek. 24:17). . . . But the leper was as one dead, and as such was shut out of the camp (Lev. 13:46; Numb. 5:2-4), and the city (2 Kings 7:3), this law being so strictly enforced that even the sister of Moses might not be exempted from it (Numb. 12:14, 15); and kings themselves, as Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:21; 2 Kings 15:5) must submit to it; men being by this exclusion taught that what here took place in a figure, should take place in the reality with every one who was found in the death of sin."

For the elaborate ceremonies incident to the cleansing of a recovered leper see Lev. chap. 14.

2. Blasphemy.—The essence of the deep sin of blasphemy lies not, as many suppose, in profanity alone, but as Dr. Kelso, *Stand. Bible Dict.*, summarizes: "Every improper use of the divine name (Lev. 24:11), speech derogatory to the Majesty of God (Matt. 26:65), and sins with a high hand—i. e. premeditated transgressions of the basal principles of the theocracy (Numb. 9:13; 15:30; Exo. 31:14)—were regarded as blasphemy; the penalty was death by stoning (Lev. 24:16)." *Smith's Bible Dict.* states: "Blasphemy, in its technical English sense, signifies the speaking evil of God, and in this sense it is found in Psalm 74:18; Isa. 52:5; Rom. 2:24, etc. . . . On this charge both our Lord and Stephen were condemned to death by the Jews. When a person heard blasphemy he laid his hand on the head of the offender, to symbolize his sole responsibility for the guilt, and rising on his feet, tore his robe, which might never again be mended." (See Matt. 26:65.)

3. Publican.—"A word originally meaning a contractor for public works or supplies, or a farmer of public lands, but later applied to Romans who bought from the government the right to collect taxes in a given territory. These buyers, always knights (senators were excluded by their rank), became capitalists and formed powerful stock companies, whose members received a percentage on the capital invested. Provincial capitalists could not buy taxes, which were sold in Rome to the highest bidders, who to recoup themselves sublet their territory (at a great advance on the price paid the government) to the native (local) publicans, who in their turn had to make a profit on their purchase money, and being assessors of property as well as collectors of taxes, had abundant opportunities for oppressing the people, who hated them both for that reason and also because the tax itself was the mark of their subjection to foreigners."—J. R. Sterrett in *Stand. Bible Dict.*

4. Fishers of Men.—“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” said Jesus to fishermen who afterward became His apostles (Matt. 4:19). Mark’s version is nearly the same (1:17), while that of Luke (5:10) reads: “From henceforth thou shalt catch men.” The correct translation is, as commentators practically agree, “From henceforth thou shalt take men alive.” This reading emphasizes the contrast given in the text—that between capturing fish to kill them and winning men to save them. Consider in this connection the Lord’s prediction through Jeremiah (16:16), that in reaching scattered Israel, “Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them;” etc.

5. “Thy Sins Be Forgiven Thee.”—The following commentary by Edersheim (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i, pp. 505, 506) on the incident under consideration is instructive: “In this forgiveness of sins He presented His person and authority as divine, and He proved it such by the miracle of healing which immediately followed. Had the two been inverted, [i. e. had Christ first healed the man and afterward told him that his sins were forgiven] there would have been evidence, indeed, of His power, but not of His divine personality, nor of His having authority to forgive sins; and this, not the doing of miracles, was the object of His teaching and mission, of which the miracles were only secondary evidence. Thus the inward reasoning of the scribes, which was open and known to Him who readeth all thoughts, issued in quite the opposite of what they could have expected. Most unwarranted, indeed, was the feeling of contempt which we trace in their unspoken words, whether we read them: ‘Why does this one thus speak blasphemies?’ or, according to a more correct transcript of them: ‘Why does this one speak thus? He blasphemeth!’ Yet from their point of view they were right, for God alone can forgive sins; nor has that power ever been given or delegated to man. But was He a mere man, like even the most honored of God’s servants? Man, indeed; but ‘the Son of Man.’ . . . It seemed easy to say: ‘Thy sins have been forgiven.’ But to Him, who had authority to do so on earth, it was neither more easy nor more difficult than to say: ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.’ Yet this latter, assuredly, proved the former, and gave it in the sight of all men unquestioned reality. And so it was the thoughts of these scribes, which, as applied to Christ, were ‘evil’—since they imputed to Him blasphemy—that gave occasion for offering real evidence of what they would have impugned and denied. In no other manner could the object alike of miracles and of this special miracle have been so attained as by the ‘evil thoughts’ of these scribes, when, miraculously brought to light, they spoke out the inmost possible doubt, and pointed to the highest of all questions concerning the Christ. And so it was once more the wrath of man which praised Him.”

CHAPTER 15.

LORD OF THE SABBATH.

THE SABBATH DISTINCTIVELY SACRED TO ISRAEL.

The observance of the Sabbath as a holy day was prominent among the Lord's requirements of His people, Israel, from a very early period in their history as a nation. Indeed, the keeping of the Sabbath as a day of surcease from ordinary toil was a national characteristic, by which the Israelites were distinguished from pagan peoples, and rightly so, for the holiness of the Sabbath was made a mark of the covenant between the chosen people and their God. The sanctity of the Sabbath had been prefigured in the account of the creation, antedating the placing of man upon the earth, as shown by the fact that God rested after the six periods or days of creative work, and blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.^a In the course of Israel's exodus, the seventh day was set apart as one of rest, upon which it was not allowed to bake, seethe, or otherwise cook food. A double supply of manna had to be gathered on the sixth day, while on other days the laying-by of a surplus of this daily bread sent from heaven was expressly forbidden. The Lord observed the sacredness of the holy day by giving no manna thereon.^b

The commandment to celebrate the Sabbath in strictness was made definite and explicit in the decalog, written by the hand of God amidst the awful glory of Sinai; and the injunction was kept before the people through frequent proclamation.^c It was unlawful to kindle a fire on that day; and record is made of a man who was put to death for gathering

^a Gen. 2:3.

^b Exo. 16:16-31.

^c Exo. 20:8-11; 23:12; 31:13-15; 34:21; Lev. 19:3; 23:3; Deut. 5:12-14.

sticks on the seventh day.^d Under the administration of later prophets, the holiness of the Sabbath, the blessings promised to those who sanctified the day unto themselves, and the sin of Sabbath desecration were reiterated in words of inspired forcefulness.^e Nehemiah admonished and reproved in the matter, and attributed the affliction of the nation to the forfeiture of Jehovah's favor through Sabbath violation.^f By the mouth of Ezekiel the Lord affirmed that the institution of the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant between Himself and the people of Israel; and with stern severity He upbraided those who heeded not the day.^g To the separate branch of the Israelitish nation that had been colonized on the western hemisphere, regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath was no less an imperative requirement.^h

The observance demanded, however, was the very opposite of affliction and burden; the Sabbath was consecrated to rest and righteous enjoyment, and was to be a day of spiritual feasting before the Lord. It was not established as a day of abstinence; all might eat, but both mistress and maid were to be relieved from the work of preparing food; neither master nor man was to plow, dig or otherwise toil; and the weekly day of rest was as much the boon of the cattle as of their owners.

In addition to the weekly Sabbath, the Lord in mercy prescribed also a sabbatic year; in every seventh year the land was to rest, and thereby its fertility was enhanced.ⁱ After seven times seven years had passed, the fiftieth was to be celebrated throughout as a year of jubilee, during which the people should live on the accumulated increase of the preceding seasons of plenty, and rejoice in liberality by

^d Exo. 35:3; Numb. 15:32-36.

^e Isa. 58:2; 58:13; Jer. 17:21-24.

^f Neh. 8:9-12; 13:15-22.

^g Ezek. 20:12-24.

^h B. of M., Jarom 1:5; Mosiah 13:16-19; 18:23.

ⁱ Lev. 25:1-8; compare 26:34, 35.

granting to one another redemption from mortgage and bond, forgiveness of debt, and general relief from burdens—all of which had to be done in mercy and justice.^j The Sabbaths established by the Lord, whether of days, of years, or of weeks of years, were to be times of refreshing, relief, blessing, bounty, and worship.

To the many who profess to regard the necessity of toil as a part of the curse evoked through Adam's fall, the Sabbath should appeal as a day of temporary reprieve, a time of exemption from labor, and as affording blessed opportunity of closer approach to the Presence from which mankind has been shut out through sin. And to those who take the higher view of life, and find in work both happiness and material blessing, the periodical relief brings refreshment and gives renewed zest for the days that follow.

But long before the advent of Christ, the original purpose of the Sabbath had come to be largely ignored in Israel; and the spirit of its observance had been smothered under the weight of rabbinical injunction and the formalism of restraint. In the time of the Lord's ministry, the technicalities prescribed as rules appended to the law were almost innumerable; and the burden thus forced upon the people had become well nigh unbearable. Among the many wholesome requirements of the Mosaic law, which the teachers and spiritual rulers of the Jews had made thus burdensome, that of Sabbath observance was especially prominent. The "hedge," which by unwarranted assumption they professedly set about the law,^k was particularly thorny in the sections devoted to the Jewish Sabbath. Even trifling infractions of traditional rules were severely punished, and the capital penalty was held before the eyes of the people as a supreme threat for extreme desecration!^l

^j Lev. 25:10-55.

^k Page 64.

^l Note 1, end of chapter.

THE HEALING OF A Cripple ON THE SABBATH.

In view of these conditions, we are not surprised to find our Lord confronted with charges of Sabbath violation relatively early in the course of His public work. An instance attended with many great developments is recorded by John,^m whose narrative covers the incident of a very impressive miracle. Jesus was again in Jerusalem, at the time of one of the Jewish festivals.ⁿ There was a pool of water, called Bethesda, near the sheep market in the city. From the recorded description, we may understand this to have been a natural spring; possibly the water was rich in dissolved solids or gases, or both, making it such as we would call today a mineral spring; for we find that the water was reputed to possess curative virtues, and many afflicted folk came to bathe therein. The spring was of the pulsating variety; at intervals its waters rose with bubbling disturbance, and then receded to the normal level. Mineral springs of this kind are known today in many parts of the world. Some believed that the periodical upwelling of the Bethesda waters was the result of supernatural agency; and it was said that "whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." The Bethesda pool was wholly or partly enclosed; and five porches had been built for the shelter of those who waited at the spring for the intermittent bubbling up of the water.

On a certain Sabbath day, Jesus visited the pool and saw many afflicted folk thus waiting. Among them lay a man who for thirty-eight years had been grievously afflicted. From the man's statement of his helplessness we may infer that his malady was paralysis, or possibly an extreme form of rheumatism; whatever his affliction, it was so disabling

^m John, chapter 5.

ⁿ Note 2, end of chapter.

as to give him little chance of getting into the pool at the critical time, for others less crippled crowded him away ; and, according to the legends regarding the curative properties of the spring, only the first to enter the pool after the agitation of the water might expect to be healed.

Jesus recognized in the man a fit subject for blessing, and said to him: "Wilt thou be made whole?" The question was so simple as almost to appear superfluous. Of course the man wanted to be made well, and on the small chance of being able to reach the water at the right moment was patiently yet eagerly waiting. There was purpose, however, in these as in all other words of the Master. The man's attention was drawn to Him, fixed upon Him ; the question aroused in the sufferer's heart renewed yearning for the health and strength of which he had been bereft since the days of his youth. His answer was pitiful, and revealed his almost hopeless state of mind ; he thought only of the rumored virtues of Bethesda pool, as he said: "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool : but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." Then spake Jesus: "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Immediately strength returned to the man, who for nearly four decades had been a helpless invalid ; he obeyed the Master, and, taking up the little mattress or pallet on which he had rested, walked away.

He had not gone far, before the Jews, that is to say, some of the official class, for so the evangelist John employs the term, saw him carrying his bed ; and it was the Sabbath day. To their peremptory reprimand he replied out of the gratitude and honest simplicity of his heart, that He who had healed him had told him to take up his bed and walk. The interest of the inquisitors was instantly turned from the man toward Him who had wrought the miracle ; but the erstwhile cripple could not name his Benefactor, as he had lost sight of Jesus in the crowd before he had found opportunity for ques-

tion or thanks. The man who had been healed went to the temple, possibly impelled by a desire to express in prayer his gratitude and joy. There Jesus found him, and said unto him: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."^o The man had probably brought about his affliction through his own sinful habits. The Lord decided that he had suffered enough in body, and terminated his physical suffering with the subsequent admonition to sin no more.

The man went and told the rulers who it was that had healed him. This he may have done with a desire to honor and glorify the Giver of his boon; we are not justified in ascribing to him any unworthy purpose, though by his act he was instrumental in augmenting the persecution of his Lord. So intense was the hatred of the priestly faction that the rulers sought a means of putting Jesus to death, under the specious pretense of His being a Sabbath-breaker. We may well ask of what act they could possibly have hoped to convict Him, even under the strictest application of their rules. There was no proscription against speaking on the Sabbath; and Jesus had but spoken to heal. He had not carried the man's bed, nor had He attempted even the lightest physical labor. By their own interpretation of the law they had no case against Him.

OUR LORD'S REPLY TO THE ACCUSING JEWS.

Nevertheless, the Jewish officials confronted Jesus with accusations. Whether the interview took place within the temple walls, on the open street, at the market place, or in the judgment hall, matters not. His reply to their charges is not confined to the question of Sabbath observance; it stands as the most comprehensive sermon in scripture on the vital subject of the relationship between the Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

^o See another instance, pages 190-192.

His first sentence added to the already intense anger of the Jews. Referring to the work He had done on the holy day, He said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." This remark they construed to be a blasphemy.^p "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." To their spoken or unuttered protest, Jesus replied, that He, the Son, was not acting independently, and in fact could do nothing except what was in accordance with the Father's will, and what He had seen the Father do; that the Father so loved the Son as to show unto Him the Father's works.

Be it observed that Jesus in no way attempted to explain away their construction of His words; on the contrary He confirmed their deductions as correct. He did associate Himself with the Father, even in a closer and more exalted relationship than they had conceived. The authority given to Him by the Father was not limited to the healing of bodily infirmities; He had power even to raise the dead—"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Moreover, the judgment of men had been committed unto Him; and no one could honor the Father except by honoring the Son. Then followed this incisive declaration: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Christ's realm was not bounded by the grave; even the dead were wholly dependent upon Him for their salvation; and to the terrified ears of His dumbfounded accusers He proclaimed the solemn truth, that even then the hour was near in which the dead should hear the voice of the Son of

^p Pages 191 and 201. For further justification of this act of healing on the Sabbath, see John 7:21-24

God. Ponder His profound affirmation: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." The murderous rage of the Jews was rebuffed by the declaration that without His submission they could not take His life: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." Another utterance was equally portentous: "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." He, the Son of the exalted and glorified Man of Holiness and now Himself a mortal Man,^q was to be the judge of men.

No wonder they marveled; such doctrine they had never before heard nor read; it was not of the scribes nor of the rabbis, of neither the Pharisaic nor Sadducean schools. But He reproved their amazement, saying: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."^r

This enunciation of the resurrection, so plainly made that the most unlettered could understand, must have offended any Sadducees present, for they emphatically denied the actuality of the resurrection. The universality of a resurrection is here unquestionably affirmed; not only the righteous but even those who merit condemnation are to come forth from their graves in their bodies of flesh and bones.^s

Then, renewing His solemn asseveration of the unity of His Father's will and His own, Christ discussed the matter of witnesses to His work. He admitted what was a recognized tenet of the time, that no man's unsupported witness of himself was sufficient; but, He added: "There is another

^q Page 142.

^r Compare Doc. and Cov. 76:16, 17. See page 24 herein.

^s Page 25.

that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true." He cites John the Baptist, and reminds them that they had sent a delegation to him, and that John had answered them by bearing testimony of the Messiah; and John had been a burning and a shining light, in whose illuminating ministry many had temporarily rejoiced. The hostile Jews were left to see that the witness of John was valid under their strictest construction of the rules of evidence; "But," He continued, "I receive not testimony from man: But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me."

Then in terms of unqualified condemnation, He told them they were devoid of the Father's word, for they refused to accept Himself whom the Father had sent. With humiliating directness He admonished these learned men of the law, these interpreters of the prophets, these professional expounders of sacred writ, to betake themselves to reading and study. "Search the scriptures," said He, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Convictingly He continued—that they who admitted and taught that in the scriptures lay the way to eternal life, refused to come to Him, of whom those same scriptures testified, though by coming they might obtain eternal life. "I receive not honour from men," He added, "But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." They knew that they sought for honor among men, received honors from one another, were made rabbis and doctors, scribes and teachers, by the bestowal of titles and degrees—all of men; but they rejected Him who came in the name of One infinitely greater than all their schools or societies—He had come in the supreme name of the Father. The cause of their spiritual ignorance was pointed out—they relied upon

the honors of men, and sought not the honor of real service in the cause of God.

He had spoken of the authority of judgment that had been committed to Himself; now He explained that they should not think He would accuse them before the Father; a lesser one than He would accuse, even Moses, another of His witnesses in whom they professed such trust—Moses whom they all were said to believe—and, driving home the full effect of His powerful arraignment, the Lord continued: “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” Such was the illuminating instruction combined with burning denunciation that these men had called forth by their futile attempt to convict Jesus on the charge of Sabbath desecration. This was but one of many evil machinations by which they so determinedly plotted, and strove to attach the stigma and invoke the penalty of Sabbath-breaking upon the very One who had ordained the Sabbath and was in truth and verity the one and only Lord thereof.

THE DISCIPLES CHARGED WITH SABBATH-BREAKING.

We may profitably consider in this connection other instances of good work done by our Lord on Sabbath days; and this we may do without undue regard to the order of the events in time. We again find Jesus in Galilee, whether prior to or after His visit to Jerusalem at the time of the unidentified feast, on which occasion He wrought the miracle of healing at the Bethesda pool, matters not. On a certain Sabbath, He and the disciples walked through a field of grain,^t and, being hungry, the disciples began to pluck some of the ripening ears; rubbing out the kernels between their hands, they ate. There was no element of theft in what they

^t Matt. 12:1-8; compare Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5.

did, for the Mosaic law provided that in passing through another's vineyard or corn field one might pluck grapes or corn to relieve hunger; but it was forbidden to use a sickle in the field, or to carry away any of the grapes in a vessel.^u The permission extended only to the relief of present need. When the disciples of Jesus availed themselves of this lawful privilege, there were Pharisees on the watch, and these came at once to the Master, saying: "Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day." The accusers doubtless had in mind the rabbinical dictum that rubbing out an ear of grain in the hands was a species of threshing; that blowing away the chaff was winnowing; and that it was unlawful to thresh or winnow on the Sabbath. Indeed, some learned rabbis had held it to be a sin to walk on grass during the Sabbath, inasmuch as the grass might be in seed, and the treading out of the seed would be as the threshing of grain.

Jesus defended the disciples by citing a precedent applicable to the case, and of much greater import. The instance was that of David, who with a small company of men had asked bread of the priest Ahimelech; for they were hungry and in haste. The priest had none but consecrated bread, the loaves of shewbread which were placed in the sanctuary at intervals, and which none but the priests were allowed to eat. In view of the condition of urgent need the priest had given the shewbread to the hungry men.^v Jesus also reminded the critical Pharisees that the priests in the temple regularly did much work on the Sabbath in the slaughtering of sacrificial victims and in altar service generally, yet were held blameless because of the higher requirements of worship which rendered such labor necessary; and added with solemn emphasis: "But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." He cited the word of God

^u Deut. 23:24, 25.

^v Note 3, end of chapter.

spoken through Hosea, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,"^w and reproved at once their ignorance and their unrighteous zeal by telling them that had they known what that scripture meant they would not have condemned the guiltless. Be it remembered, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."^a

His reproof was followed by the affirmation of His personal supremacy: "*For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.*" What can we gather from that declaration but that He, Jesus, there present in the flesh, was the Being through whom the Sabbath had been ordained, that it was He who had given and written in stone the decalog, including "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy," and, "the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God"?

A PHARISAICAL PLOT.

Again on a Sabbath, Jesus went into a synagog, and saw in the congregation a man whose right hand was withered.^x There were Pharisees present, and they watched to see whether Jesus would heal the man, their purpose being to accuse Him if He did so. The Pharisees asked: "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?" Our Lord countered their poorly veiled purpose by asking: "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days?" and extended the question, "or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" They held their peace, for the question was double-edged. To reply in the affirmative would have been to justify the work of healing; a negative answer would have stultified them. He put another question: "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep?"

As the Pharisees could not or would not reply, He summed up the whole matter thus: "Wherefore it is lawful

^w Hos. 6:6; compare Micah 6:6-9.

^a Mark 2:27. Note 4, end of chapter.

^x Matt. 12:10-13; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-8.

to do well on the sabbath days." He called upon the man with the withered hand to stand forth before the congregation. Grief and anger were mingled in His penetrating and sweeping glance; but, turning with compassion toward the afflicted one, He commanded him to stretch forth his hand; the man obeyed, and lo! the hand "was restored whole, like as the other."

The discomfited Pharisees were furious, "filled with madness" Luke says; and they went out to plot anew against the Lord. So bitter was their hatred that they allied themselves with the Herodians, a political party generally unpopular among the Jews.^y The rulers of the people were ready to enter into any intrigue or alliance to accomplish their avowed purpose of bringing about the death of the Lord Jesus. Aware of the wicked determination against Him, Jesus withdrew Himself from the locality. Other accusations of Sabbath-breaking, brought against Christ by Jewish casuists, will be considered later.^z

NOTES TO CHAPTER 15.

I. Rabbinical Requirements Concerning Sabbath Observance.—"No feature of the Jewish system was so marked as their extraordinary strictness in the outward observance of the Sabbath, as a day of entire rest. The Scribes had elaborated from the command of Moses, a vast array of prohibitions and injunctions, covering the whole of social, individual, and public life, and carried it to the extreme of ridiculous caricature. Lengthened rules were prescribed as to the kinds of knots which might legally be tied on the Sabbath. The camel-driver's knot and the sailor's were unlawful, and it was equally illegal to tie or to loose them. A knot which could be untied with one hand might be undone. A shoe or sandal, a woman's cup, a wine or oil-skin, or a flesh-pot might be tied. A pitcher at a spring might be tied to the body-sash, but not with a cord. . . . To kindle or extinguish a fire on the Sabbath was a great desecration of the day, nor was even sickness allowed to violate Rabbinical rules. It was forbidden to give an emetic on the Sabbath—to set a broken bone, or put back a dislocated joint, though some Rabbis, more liberal, held that whatever endangered life made the Sabbath law void, 'for the commands were given to Israel only that they might live by them.' One who was buried under ruins on the Sab-

^y Page 68.

^z For instances, see Luke 13:14-16; 14:3-6; John 9:14-16.

bath, might be dug for and taken out, if alive, but, if dead, he was to be left where he was, till the Sabbath was over."—Geikie, *Life and Words of Christ*, chap. 38.

2. The Unnamed Feast.—There has been no little discussion as to the particular festival referred to in John 5:1, at the time of which Jesus healed the cripple at the pool of Bethesda. Many writers hold that it was the Passover, others that it was the feast of Purim, or some other Jewish celebration. The only semblance of importance attaching to the question is the possibility of learning from the fact, if it could be proved, something of the chronological order of events at this period of our Lord's life. We are not told which feast this was, neither the year nor the time of the year when it occurred. The miracle wrought on the occasion, and the doctrinal discourse delivered as a result thereof, depend for their value in no degree on the determination of date.

3. Shewbread.—The name means "bread of the presence," signifying that it was placed in the presence of Jehovah. The bread so sanctified consisted of twelve loaves, made without leaven. They were to be deposited in the Holy Place in two columns of six loaves each. Zenos, in *Stand. Bible Dict.* writes: "They were allowed to remain there for a whole week, at the end of which period they were removed, and eaten by the priest upon holy ground, i.e. within the precincts of the sanctuary. For other persons than priests to eat of the loaves of the shewbread was regarded as sacrilegious, for they were 'holy.'" See Exo. 25:30; Lev. 24:5-9; 1 Sam. 21:1-6.

4. The Sabbath Was Made for Man and Not Man for the Sabbath.—Edersheim (vol. i, pp. 57, 58) says: "When on his flight from Saul, David had, 'when an hungered,' eaten of the shewbread and given it to his followers, although, by the letter of the Levitical law, it was only to be eaten by the priests, Jewish tradition vindicated his conduct on the plea that 'danger to life superseded the Sabbath law,' and hence, all laws connected with it. . . . In truth, the reason why David was blameless in eating the shewbread was the same as that which made the Sabbath labor of the priests lawful. The Sabbath law was not one merely of rest, but of rest for worship. The service of the Lord was the object in view. The priests worked on the Sabbath, because this service was the object of the Sabbath; and David was allowed to eat of the shewbread, not [solely] because there was danger to life from starvation, but because he pleaded that he was on the service of the Lord, and needed this provision. The disciples, when following the Lord, were similarly on the service of the Lord; ministering to Him was more than ministering in the temple, for He was greater than the temple. If the Pharisees had believed this, they would not have questioned their conduct, nor in so doing have themselves infringed that higher law which enjoined mercy, not sacrifice."

CHAPTER 16.

THE CHOSEN TWELVE.

THEIR CALL AND ORDINATION.^a

The night preceding the morn on which the Twelve Apostles were called and ordained was spent by the Lord in solitary seclusion; He had "continued all night in prayer to God."^b Then, when day had come, and while many people were gathering to hear more of the new and wonderful gospel of the kingdom, He called to come closer some who had theretofore been devotedly associated together as His disciples or followers, and from among them He chose twelve, whom he ordained and named apostles.^c Prior to that time none of these had been distinguished by any special delegation of authority or appointment; they had been numbered with the disciples in general, though, as we have seen, seven had received a preliminary call, and had promptly responded thereto by abandoning wholly or in part their business affairs, and had followed the Master. These were Andrew, John, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael, James, and Levi Matthew. Prior to this eventful day, however, none of the Twelve had been ordained or set apart to their sacred office.

The three Gospel-writers who make record of the organization of the Twelve place Simon Peter first and Judas Iscariot last in the category; they agree also in the relative position of some but not of all the others. Following the order given by Mark, and this may be the most convenient since he names as the first three those who later became most prominent, we have the following list: Simon Peter,

^a Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16.

^b Luke 6:12.

^c Luke 3:13; compare John 15:16; see also Acts 1:22.

James (son of Zebedee), John (brother of the last-named), Andrew (brother of Simon Peter), Philip, Bartholomew (or Nathanael), Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alpheus), Judas (also known as Lebbeus or Thaddeus), Simon (distinguished by his surname Zelotes, also known as the Canaanite), and Judas Iscariot.

THE TWELVE CONSIDERED INDIVIDUALLY.

Simon, named as the first apostle, is more commonly known as *Peter*—the appellation given him by the Lord on the occasion of their first meeting, and afterward confirmed.^d He was the son of Jona, or Jonas, and by vocation was a fisherman. He and his brother Andrew were partners with James and John, the sons of Zebedee; and apparently the fishing business was a prosperous one with them, for they owned their boats and gave employment to other men.^e Peter's early home had been at the little fishery town of Bethsaida,^f on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee; but about the time of his first association with Jesus, or soon thereafter, he, with others of his family, removed to Capernaum, where he appears to have become an independent householder.^g Simon Peter was a married man before his call to the ministry. He was well to do in a material way; and when he once spoke of having left all to follow Jesus, the Lord did not deny that Peter's sacrifice of temporal possessions was as great as had been implied. We are not justified in regarding him as unlettered or ignorant. True, both he and John were designated by the council of rulers as “unlearned and ignorant men,”^h but this was spoken of them as indicating their lack of training in the schools of the rabbis; and it is worthy of note, that the members of that same

^d John 1:42; compare Matt. 16:18.

^e Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:10.

^f John 1:44; 12:21.

^g Matt. 8:14; Mark 1:29; Luke 4:38.

^h Acts 4:13.

council were amazed at the wisdom and power manifested by the two apostles, whom they professed to despise.

In temperament Peter was impulsive and stern, and, until trained by severe experience, was lacking in firmness. He had many human weaknesses, yet in spite of them all he eventually overcame the temptations of Satan and the frailties of the flesh, and served his Lord as the appointed and acknowledged leader of the Twelve. Of the time and place of his death the scriptures do not speak; but the manner thereof was prefigured by the resurrected Lord;ⁱ and in part was foreseen by Peter himself.^j Tradition, originating in the writings of the early Christian historians other than the apostles, states that Peter met death by crucifixion as a martyr during the persecution incident to the reign of Nero, probably between A. D. 64 and 68. Origen states that the apostle was crucified with his head downward. Peter, with James and John, his associates in the presidency of the Twelve, has ministered as a resurrected being in the present dispensation, in restoring to earth the Melchizedek Priesthood, including the Holy Apostleship, which had been taken away because of the apostasy and unbelief of men.^k

James and John, brothers by birth, partners in business as fishermen, brethren in the ministry, were associated together and with Peter in the apostolic calling. The Lord bestowed upon the pair a title in common—Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder^l—possibly with reference to the zeal they developed in His service, which, indeed, at times had to be restrained, as when they would have had fire called from heaven to destroy the Samaritan villagers who had refused hospitality to the Master.^m They and their mother aspired to the highest honors of the kingdom, and asked that the two be given places, one on the right the other on the left of

ⁱ John 21:18, 19.

^j 2 Peter 1:14.

^k Doc. and Cov. 27:12. Page 768 herein.

^l Mark 3:17.

^m Luke 9:54. See also Mark 9:38, for instance of John's impulsive zeal.

Christ in His glory. This ambition was gently reproved by the Lord, and the request gave offense to the other apostles.ⁿ With Peter these two brothers were witnesses of many of the most important incidents in the life of Jesus; thus, the three were the only apostles admitted to witness the raising of the daughter of Jairus from death to life;^o they were the only members of the Twelve present at the transfiguration of Christ;^p they were nearest the Lord during the period of His mortal agony in Gethsemane;^q and, as heretofore told, they have ministered in these modern days in the restoration of the Holy Apostleship with all its ancient authority and power of blessing.^r James is commonly designated in theological literature as James I, to distinguish him from the other apostle bearing the same name. James, the son of Zebedee, was the first of the apostles to meet a martyr's violent death; he was beheaded by order of the king, Herod Agrippa.^s John had been a disciple of the Baptist, and had demonstrated his confidence in the latter's testimony of Jesus by promptly turning from the forerunner and following the Lord.^t He became a devoted servant, and repeatedly refers to himself as the disciple "whom Jesus loved."^u At the last supper John sat next to Jesus leaning his head upon the Master's breast;^v and next day as he stood beneath the cross he received from the dying Christ the special charge to care for the Lord's mother;^w and to this he promptly responded by conducting the weeping Mary to his own house. He was the first to recognize the risen Lord on the shores of Galilee, and received from His immortal lips encouragement of his hope that his life would be continued in the body, in order that he might minister among men

ⁿ Mark 10:35-41; compare Matt. 20:20-24.

^o Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51.

^p Matt. 17:1-2; Luke 9:28-29.

^q Matt. 26:36, 37.

^r Doc. and Cov. 27:12. Page 768 herein.

^s Acts 12: 1, 2.

^t John 1:35-40; see page 140.

^u John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2.

^v John 13:23, 25.

^w John 19:25-27.

until the Christ shall come in His glory.^x The realization of that hope has been attested by revelation in modern days.^y

Andrew, son of Jona and brother of Simon Peter, is mentioned less frequently than the three already considered. He had been one of the Baptist's followers, and with John, the son of Zebedee, left the Baptist to learn from Jesus; and having learned he went in search of Peter, solemnly averred to him that the Messiah had been found, and brought his brother to the Savior's feet.^z He shared with Peter in the honor of the call of the Lord on the sea shore, and in the promise "I will make you fishers of men."^a In one instance we read of Andrew as present with Peter, James and John, in a private interview with the Lord;^b and he is mentioned in connection with the miraculous feeding of the five thousand,^c and as associated with Philip in arranging an interview between certain inquiring Greeks and Jesus.^d He is named with others in connection with our Lord's ascension.^e Tradition is rife with stories about this man, but of the extent of his ministry, the duration of his life, and the circumstances of his death, we have no authentic record.

Philip may have been the first to receive the authoritative call "Follow me" from the lips of Jesus, and we find him immediately testifying that Jesus was the long expected Messiah. His home was in Bethsaida, the town of Peter, Andrew, James, and John. It is said that Jesus found him,^f whereas the others concerned in that early affiliation seem to have come of themselves severally to Christ. We find brief mention of him at the time the five thousand were fed, on which occasion Jesus asked him "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" This was done to test and

^x John 21:7, 21-23.

^y Doc. and Cov. Sec. 7; compare B. of M., 3 Nephi 28:1-12.

^z John 1:35-40.

^a Matt. 4:18, 19.

^b Mark 13:3.

^c John 6:8.

^d John 12:20-22.

^e Acts 1:13.

^f John 1:43-45.

prove him, for Jesus knew what would be done. Philip's reply was based on a statement of the small amount of money at hand, and showed no expectation of miraculous intervention.^g It was to him the Greeks applied when they sought a meeting with Jesus as noted in connection with Andrew. He was mildly reproved for his misunderstanding when he asked Jesus to show to him and the others the Father—"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"^a Aside from incidental mention of his presence as one of the Eleven after the ascension, the scriptures tell us nothing more concerning him.

Bartholomew is mentioned in scripture by this name only in connection with his ordination to the apostleship, and as one of the Eleven after the ascension. The name means son of Tolmai. It is practically certain, however, that he is the man called Nathanael in John's Gospel—the one whom Christ designated as "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."^h He is named again as among those who went fishing with Peter after the resurrection of Christ.ⁱ His home was in Cana of Galilee. The reasons for assuming that Bartholomew and Nathanael are the same persons are these: Bartholomew is named in each of the three synoptic Gospels as an apostle, but Nathanael is not mentioned. Nathanael is named twice in John's Gospel, and Bartholomew not at all; Bartholomew and Philip, or Nathanael and Philip, are mentioned together.

Matthew, or *Levi*, son of Alpheus, was one of the seven who receive 1 a call to follow Christ before the ordination of the Twelve. He it was who gave a feast, for attending which Jesus and the disciples were severely criticized by the Pharisees,^j on the charge that it was unseemly for Him to eat with publicans and sinners. Matthew was a pub-

^g John 6:5-7.

^a John 14:8, 9.

^h John 1:45-51; see page 141.

ⁱ John 21:2, 3.

^j Page 194.

lican; he so designates himself in the Gospel he wrote;^k but the other evangelists omit the mention when including him with the Twelve. His Hebrew name, Levi, is understood by many as an indication of priestly lineage. Of his ministry we have no detailed account; though he is the author of the first Gospel, he refrains from special mention of himself except in connection with his call and ordination. He is spoken of by other than scriptural writers as one of the most active of the apostles after Christ's death, and as operating in lands far from Palestine.

Thomas, also known as Didymus, the Greek equivalent of his Hebrew name, meaning "a twin," is mentioned as a witness of the raising of Lazarus. His devotion to Jesus is shown by his desire to accompany the Lord to Bethany, though persecution in that region was almost certain. To his fellow apostles Thomas said: "Let us also go, that we may die with him."^l Even as late in his experience as the night before the crucifixion, Thomas had failed to comprehend the impending necessity of the Savior's sacrifice; and when Jesus referred to going away and leaving the others to follow, Thomas asked how they could know the way. For his lack of understanding he stood reproved.^m He was absent when the resurrected Christ appeared to the assembled disciples in the evening of the day of His rising; and on being informed by the others that they had seen the Lord, he forcefully expressed his doubt, and declared he would not believe unless he could see and feel for himself the wounds in the crucified body. Eight days later the Lord visited the apostles again, when, as on the earlier occasion, they were within closed doors; and to Thomas the Lord said: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." Then Thomas, no longer doubting but with love and reverence filling his soul,

^k Matt. 10:3.

^l John 11:16.

^m John 14:1-7.

exclaimed "My Lord and my God." The Lord said unto him: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."ⁿ Of Thomas no further record appears in the New Testament aside from that of his presence with his fellows after the ascension.

James, son of Alpheus, is mentioned in the Gospels only in the matter of his ordination to the apostleship; and but once elsewhere in the New Testament by the appellation "son of Alpheus".^o In writings other than scriptural he is sometimes designated as James II to avoid confusing him with James the son of Zebedee. There is acknowledged uncertainty concerning the identity of James the son of Alpheus as the James or one of the James's referred to in the Acts and the Epistles;^p and a plenitude of controversial literature on the subject is extant.^q

Judas is called *Lebbeus Thaddeus* by Matthew, *Thaddeus* by Mark, and *Judas the brother of James* by Luke.^r The only other specific reference to this apostle is made by John, and is incident to the last long interview between Jesus and the apostles, when this Judas, "not Iscariot," asked how or why Jesus would manifest Himself to His chosen servants and not to the world at large. The man's

ⁿ John 20:24-29. Page 689 herein.

^o Acts 1:13. Note 3, end of chapter.

^p Acts 12:17; 15:13-21; 21:18; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12; and the Epistle of James.

^q Concerning the James's mentioned in the New Testament, the opinion of Bible scholars is divided, the question being as to whether two or three individuals are indicated. Those who hold that there were three men of this name distinguish them as follows: (1) James the son of Zebedee and brother of John the apostle; all scriptural references to him are explicit; (2) James the son of Alpheus; and (3) James the brother of the Lord (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19). If we accept this classification, the references given in footnote "p" on this page apply to James the Lord's brother. Both the Oxford and Bagster Bible "Helps" treat James the son of Alpheus and James the Lord's brother as one person, the expression "son of" being understood in its general sense only (see page 280). The Bagster designation is: "James II, apostle, son of Alpheus, brother or cousin to Jesus." (See Note 3, end of chapter.) The Nave "Student's Bible" states (page 1327) that the question as to whether James the Lord's brother "is identical with James the son of Alpheus is one of the most difficult questions in the biographical history of the Gospels." Faussett (in his "Cyclopedia Critical and Expository") supports the contention that but one James is meant; and other acknowledged authorities treat the two as one. For detailed consideration of the subject the reader is referred to special works.

^r Note 1, end of chapter.

question shows that the really distinguishing character of the apostleship was not fully comprehended by him at that time.

Simon Zelotes, so designated in Acts,^u and as *Simon called Zelotes* in Luke's Gospel, is distinguished by both Matthew and Mark as the *Canaanite*. The last designation has no reference to the town of Cana, nor to the land of Canaan, neither is it in any sense of geographical significance; it is the Syro-Chaldaic equivalent of the Greek word which is rendered in the English translation "Zelotes." The two names, therefore, have the same fundamental meaning, and each refers to the Zealots, a Jewish sect or faction, known for its zeal in maintaining the Mosaic ritual. Doubtless Simon had learned moderation and toleration from the teachings of Christ; otherwise he would scarcely have been suited to the apostolic ministry. His zealous earnestness, properly directed, may have developed into a most serviceable trait of character. This apostle is nowhere in the scriptures named apart from his colleagues.

Judas Iscariot is the only Judean named among the Twelve; all the others were Galileans. He is generally understood to have been a resident of Kerioth, a small town in the southerly part of Judea, but a few miles west from the Dead Sea, though for this tradition, as also for the signification of his surname, we lack direct authority. So too we are uninformed as to his lineage, except that his father's name was Simon.^v He served as treasurer or agent of the apostolic company, receiving and disbursing such offerings as were made by disciples and friends, and purchasing supplies as required.^w That he was unprincipled and dishonest in the discharge of this trust is attested by John. His avaricious and complaining nature revealed itself in his murmuring against what he called a waste of costly spike-

^u Acts 1:13; compare Luke 6:15.

^v John 6:71; 12:4; 13:26.

^w John 12:6; 13:29.

nard, in the anointing of the Lord by Mary but a few days before the crucifixion ; he hypocritically suggested that the precious ointment could have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor.^x The crowning deed of perfidy in the career of Iscariot was his deliberate betrayal of his Master to death ; and this the infamous creature did for a price, and accomplished the foul deed with a kiss. He brought his guilty life to a close by a revolting suicide and his spirit went to the awful fate reserved for the sons of perdition.^y

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TWELVE.

A survey of the general characteristics and qualifications of this body of twelve men reveals some interesting facts. Before their selection as apostles they had all become close disciples of the Lord ; they believed in Him ; several of them, possibly all, had openly confessed that He was the Son of God ; and yet it is doubtful that any one of them fully understood the real significance of the Savior's work. It is evident by the later remarks of many of them, and by the instructions and rebuke they called forth from the Master, that the common Jewish expectation of a Messiah who would reign in splendor as an earthly sovereign after He had subdued all other nations, had a place even in the hearts of these chosen ones. After long experience, Peter's concern was : "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee ; what shall we have therefore?"^z They were as children to be trained and taught ; but they were mostly willing pupils, receptive of soul, and imbued with a sincere eagerness to serve. To Jesus they were His little ones, His children, His servants, and His friends, as they merited.^a They were all of the common people, not rabbis, scholars, nor priestly officials. Their inner natures, not their outward accomplish-

^x John 12:1-7; compare Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9.

^y Matt. 27:5; compare Acts 1:18; see also John 17:12; Doc. and Cov. 76:31-48; 132:27.

^z Matt. 19:27.

^a Matt. 10:42; John 21:5; 13:16. compare verse 13; 15:14, 15.

ments, were taken into prime account in the Lord's choosing. The Master chose them; they did not choose themselves; by Him they were ordained,^b and they could in consequence rely the more implicitly upon His guidance and support. To them much was given; much of them was required. With the one black exception they all became shining lights in the kingdom of God, and vindicated the Master's selection. He recognized in each the characteristics of fitness developed in the primeval world of spirits.^c

DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES.

Discipleship is general; any follower of a man or devotee to a principle may be called a disciple. The Holy Apostleship is an office and calling belonging to the Higher or Melchizedek Priesthood, at once exalted and specific, comprising as a distinguishing function that of personal and special witness to the divinity of Jesus Christ as the one and only Redeemer and Savior of mankind.^d The apostleship is an individual bestowal, and as such is conferred only through ordination. That the Twelve did constitute a council or "quorum" having authority in the Church established by Jesus Christ, is shown by their ministrations after the Lord's resurrection and ascension. Their first official act was that of filling the vacancy in their organization occasioned by the apostasy and death of Judas Iscariot; and in connection with this procedure, the presiding apostle, Peter, set forth the essential qualifications of the one who would be chosen and ordained, which comprised such knowledge of Jesus, His life, death, and resurrection, as would make the new apostle one with the Eleven as special witnesses of the Lord's work.^e

The ordination of the Twelve Apostles marked the in-

^b John 15:16.

^c Pages 8 and 17.

^d Doc. and Cov. 18:27-33; 20:38-44; 107:1-9, 23, 24, 39.

^e Acts 1:15-26.

auguration of an advanced epoch in the earthly ministry of Jesus, an epoch characterized by the organization of a body of men invested with the authority of the Holy Priesthood, upon whom would rest, more particularly after the Lord's departure, the duty and responsibility of continuing the work He had begun, and of building up the Church established by Him.

The word "apostle" is an Anglicized form derived from the Greek *apostolos*, meaning literally "one who is sent," and connoting an envoy or official messenger, who speaks and acts by the authority of one superior to himself. In this sense Paul afterward applied the title to Christ as one specially sent and commissioned of the Father.^f

The Lord's purpose in choosing and ordaining the Twelve is thus enunciated by Mark: "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils."^g For a season following their ordination the apostles remained with Jesus, being specially trained and instructed by Him for the work then before them; afterward they were specifically charged and sent forth to preach and to administer in the authority of their priesthood, as shall be hereafter considered.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 16.

1. Judas Lebbeus Thaddeus.—This Judas (not Iscariot) is designated in the authorized version of Luke 6:16, and Acts 1:13, as "*the brother of James*." That the words "the brother" are an addition to the original text is indicated by italics. The revised version of these passages reads in each instance "*the son of James*," with italics of corresponding significance. The original reads "Judas of James." We are uninformed as to which James is referred to, and as to whether the Judas here mentioned was the son, the brother, or some other relative of the unidentified James.

2. The Meaning of "Apostle."—"The title 'Apostle' is likewise one of special significance and sanctity; it has been given of God, and belongs only to those who have been called and

^f Heb. 3:1; see Note 2, end of chapter.

^g Mark 3:14, 15.

ordained as 'special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world, thus differing from other officers in the Church in the duties of their calling' (Doc. and Cov. 107:23). By derivation the word 'apostle' is the English equivalent of the Greek *apostolos*, indicating a messenger, an ambassador, or literally 'one who is sent.' It signifies that he who is rightly so called, speaks and acts not of himself, but as the representative of a higher power whence his commission issued; and in this sense the title is that of a servant, rather than that of a superior. Even the Christ, however, is called an Apostle with reference to His ministry in the flesh (Hebrews 3: 1), and this appellation is justified by His repeated declaration that He came to earth to do not His own will but that of the Father by whom *He was sent*.

"Though an apostle is thus seen to be essentially an envoy, or ambassador, his authority is great, as is also the responsibility associated therewith, for he speaks in the name of a power greater than his own—the name of Him whose special witness he is. When one of the Twelve is sent to minister in any stake, mission or other division of the Church, or to labor in regions where no Church organization has been effected, he acts as the representative of the First Presidency, and has the right to use his authority in doing whatever is requisite for the furtherance of the work of God. His duty is to preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances thereof, and set in order the affairs of the Church, wherever he is sent. So great is the sanctity of this special calling, that the title 'Apostle' should not be used lightly as the common or ordinary form of address applied to living men called to this office. The quorum or council of the Twelve Apostles as existent in the Church to-day may better be spoken of as the 'Quorum of the Twelve,' the 'Council of the Twelve,' or simply as the 'Twelve,' than as the 'Twelve Apostles,' except as particular occasion may warrant the use of the more sacred term. It is advized that the title 'Apostle' be not applied as a prefix to the name of any member of the Council of the Twelve; but that such a one be addressed or spoken of as 'Brother _____,' or 'Elder _____,' and when necessary or desirable, as in announcing his presence in a public assembly, an explanatory clause may be added, thus, 'Elder _____, one of the Council of the Twelve.'"—From "The Honor and Dignity of Priesthood," by the author, *Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, No. 5, pp. 409-410.

3. "Of Alpheus," or "Son of Alpheus."—In all Bible passages specifying "James son of Alpheus" (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13) the word *son* has been supplied by the translators, and therefore properly appears in *Italics*. The phrase in the Greek reads "James of Alpheus." This fact must not be given undue weight in support of the thought that the James spoken of was not the son of Alpheus; for the word *son* has been similarly added in the translation of other passages, in all of which *Italics* are used to indicate the words supplied, e. g. "James the *son* of Zebedee" (Matt. 10:2; see also Mark 3:17). Read in this connection Note 1 on the opposite page.

CHAPTER 17.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

At some time very near that of the ordination of the Twelve, Jesus delivered a remarkable discourse, which, in reference to the place where it was given, has come to be known as the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew presents an extended account occupying three chapters of the first Gospel; Luke gives a briefer synopsis.^a Circumstantial variations appearing in the two records are of minor importance;^b it is the sermon itself to which we may profitably devote attention. Luke introduces in different parts of his writings many of the precious precepts given as parts of the sermon recorded as a continuous discourse in the Gospel written by Matthew. In our present study we shall be guided principally by Matthew's account. Some portions of this comprehensive address were expressly directed to the disciples, who had been or would be called to the apostleship and in consequence be required to renounce all their worldly interests for the labors of the ministry; other parts were and are of general application. Jesus had ascended the mountain side, probably to escape the crowds that thronged Him in or near the towns.^c The disciples gathered about Him, and there He sat and taught them.^d

THE BEATITUDES.^e

The opening sentences are rich in blessing, and the first section of the discourse is devoted to an explanation of what constitutes genuine blessedness; the lesson, moreover, was

^a Matt. chaps. 5, 6, 7; Luke 6:20-49. See also the version of the Sermon as delivered by Jesus Christ after His resurrection, to the Nephites on the western continent; B. of M., 3 Nephi, chaps. 12, 13, 14. See also chapter 39 herein.

^b Note 1, end of chapter.

^c Matt. 4:23-25; read these verses in connection with 5:1; see also Luke 6:17-19.

^d Note 1, end of chapter.

^e Matt. 5:3-12; compare Luke 6:20-26; and B. of M., 3 Nephi 12:1-12.

made simple and unambiguous by specific application, each of the blessed being assured of recompense and reward in the enjoyment of conditions directly opposite to those under which he had suffered. The blessings particularized by the Lord on this occasion have been designated in literature of later time as the Beatitudes. The poor in spirit are to be made rich as rightful heirs to the kingdom of heaven; the mourner shall be comforted for he shall see the divine purpose in his grief, and shall again associate with the beloved ones of whom he has been bereft; the meek, who suffer spoliation rather than jeopardize their souls in contention, shall inherit the earth; those that hunger and thirst for the truth shall be fed in rich abundance; they that show mercy shall be judged mercifully; the pure in heart shall be admitted to the very presence of God; the peacemakers, who try to save themselves and their fellows from strife, shall be numbered among the children of God; they that suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness shall inherit the riches of the eternal kingdom. To the disciples the Lord spake directly, saying: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."^f

It is evident that the specified blessings and the happiness comprised therein are to be realized in their fulness only beyond the grave; though the joy that comes from the consciousness of right living brings, even in this world, a rich return. An important element in this splendid elucidation of the truly blessed state is the implied distinction between pleasure and happiness.^g Mere pleasure is at best but fleeting; happiness is abiding, for in the recollection thereof is joy renewed. Supreme happiness is not an earthly attainment; the promised "fulness of joy" lies beyond death and

^f Matt. 5:11, 12; compare Luke 6:26; B. of M., 3 Nephi 12:11, 12.

^g Note 2, end of chapter.

the resurrection.^h While man exists in this mortal state he needs some of the things of the world; he must have food and clothing and provision for shelter; and beside these bare necessities he may righteously desire the facilities of education, the incidentals of advancing civilization, and the things that are conducive to refinement and culture; yet all of these are but aids to achievement, not the end to attain which man was made mortal.

The Beatitudes are directed to the duties of mortal life as a preparation for a greater existence yet future. In the kingdom of heaven, twice named in this part of the Lord's discourse, are true riches and unfailing happiness to be found. The kingdom of heaven was the all-comprising text of this wonderful sermon; the means of reaching the kingdom and the glories of eternal citizenship therein are the main divisions of the treatise.

DIGNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MINISTRY.ⁱ

The Master next proceeded to instruct with particular directness those upon whom would devolve the responsibility of the ministry as His commissioned representatives. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said He. Salt is the great preservative; as such it has had practical use since very ancient times. Salt was prescribed as an essential addition to every meat offering under the Mosaic law.^j Long before the time of Christ, the use of salt had been accorded a symbolism of fidelity, hospitality, and covenant.^k To be of use salt must be pure; to be of any saving virtue as salt, it must be salt indeed, and not the product of chemical alteration or of earthy admixture, whereby its saltiness or "savor" would be

^h Doc. and Cov. 93:33.

ⁱ Matt. 5:13-20; compare Luke 14:34-35; B. of M., 3 Nephi 12:13-20.

^j Lev. 2:13; compare Ezra 6:9; Ezek. 43:24.

^k Note the expression "covenant of salt," indicating the covenant between Jehovah and Israel, Lev. 2:13; Numb. 18:19; compare 2 Chron. 13:5.

lost;¹ and, as worthless stuff, it would be fit only to be thrown away. Against such change of faith, against such admixture with the sophistries, so-called philosophies, and heresies of the times, the disciples were especially warned. Then, changing the figure, Jesus likened them to the light of the world, and enjoined upon them the duty of keeping their light before the people, as prominently as stands a city built upon a hill, to be seen from all directions, a city that cannot be hid. Of what service would a lighted candle be if hidden under a tub or a box? "Let your light so shine before men," said He, "that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

That they should make no error as to the relationship of the ancient law and the gospel of the kingdom which He was elucidating, Jesus assured them that He had not come to destroy the law nor to nullify the teachings and predictions of the prophets, but to fulfil such and to establish that for which the developments of the centuries gone had been but preparatory. The gospel may be said to have destroyed the Mosaic law only as the seed is destroyed in the growth of the new plant, only as the bud is destroyed by the bursting forth of the rich, full, and fragrant flowers, only as infancy and youth pass forever as the maturity of years develops. Not a jot or a tittle of the law was to be void. A more effective analogy than the last could scarcely have been conceived; the jot or yod, and the tittle, were small literary marks in the Hebrew script; for present purposes we may regard them as equivalent to the dot of an "i" or the cross of a "t"; with the first, the jot, our English word "iota," signifying a trifle, is related. Not even the least commandment could be violated without penalty; but the disciples were admonished to take heed that their keeping of the commandments was not after the manner of the scribes and Pharisees, whose observance was that of ceremonial externalism, lack-

¹ Note 3, end of chapter.

ing the essentials of genuine devotion ; for they were assured that by such an insincere course they could “in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

THE LAW SUPERSEDED BY THE GOSPEL.”^m

The next section of the sermon deals with the superiority of the gospel of Christ over the law of Moses, and contrasts the requirements of the two in particular instances. Whereas the law forbade murder, and provided a just penalty for the crime, Christ taught that one’s giving way to anger, which might possibly lead to violence or even murder, was of itself a sin. To maliciously use an offensive epithet such as “Raca” laid one liable to punishment under the decree of the council, and to call another a fool placed one “in danger of hell fire.” These objectionable designations were regarded at that time as especially opprobrious and were therefore expressive of hateful intent. The murderer’s hand is impelled by the hatred in his heart. The law provided penalty for the deed ; the gospel rebuked the evil passion in its incipiency. To emphasize this principle, the Master showed that hatred was not to be atoned by a material sacrifice ; and that if one came to make an offering at the altar, and remembered that he was at enmity with his brother, he should first go to that brother and be reconciled, even though such a course involved the interruption of the ceremonial, which was a particularly grievous incident according to the judgment of the priests. Differences and contentions were to be adjusted without delay.

The law forbade the awful sin of adultery ; Christ said that the sin began in the lustful glance, the sensual thought ; and He added that it was better to become blind than to look with evil eye ; better to lose a hand than to work iniquity therewith. Touching the matter of divorce, in which great laxity prevailed in that day, Jesus declared that except

^m Matt. 5:21-48; Luke 6:27-36; compare B. of M., 3 Nephi 12:21-48.

for the most serious offense of infidelity to marriage vows, no man could divorce his wife without becoming himself an offender, in that she, marrying again while still a wife not righteously divorced, would be guilty of sin, and so would be the man to whom she was so married.

Of old it had been forbidden to swear or take oaths except in solemn covenant before the Lord; but in the gospel dispensation the Lord forbade that men swear at all; and the heinousness of wanton oaths was expounded. Grievously sinful indeed it was and is to swear by heaven, which is the abode of God; or by earth, which is His creation and by Him called His footstool; or by Jerusalem, which was regarded by those who swore as the city of the great King; or by one's own head, which is part of the body God has created. Moderation in speech, decision and simplicity were enjoined, to the exclusion of expletives, profanity and oaths.

Of old the principle of retaliation had been tolerated, by which one who had suffered injury could exact or inflict a penalty of the same nature as the offense. Thus an eye was demanded for the loss of an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life.ⁿ In contrast, Christ taught that men should rather suffer than do evil, even to the extent of submission without resistance under certain implied conditions. His forceful illustrations—that if one were smitten on one cheek he should turn the other to the smiter; that if a man took another's coat by process of law, the loser should allow his cloak to be taken also; that if one was pressed into service to carry another's burden a mile, he should willingly go two miles; that one should readily give or lend as asked—are not to be construed as commanding abject subserviency to unjust demands, nor as an abrogation of the principle of self-protection. These instructions were directed primarily to the apostles, who would be professedly devoted to the work of

ⁿ Exo. 21:23-25; Lev. 24:17-22; Deut. 19:21.

the kingdom to the exclusion of all other interests. In their ministry it would be better to suffer material loss or personal indignity and imposition at the hands of wicked oppressors, than to bring about an impairment of efficiency and a hindrance in work through resistance and contention. To such as these the Beatitudes were particularly applicable—Blessed are the meek, the peace-makers, and they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Of old it had been said: "Love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy";^o but the Lord now taught: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." This was a new doctrine. Never before had Israel been required to love their foes. Friendship for enemies had found no place in the Mosaic code: indeed the people had grown to look upon Israel's enemies as God's enemies; and now Jesus required that tolerance, mercy, and even love be meted out to such! He supplemented the requirement by an explanation—through the course indicated by Him men may become children of God, like unto their Heavenly Father to the extent of their obedience; for the Father is kind, long-suffering and tolerant, causing His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sending rain for the sustenance of both just and unjust.^p And further, what excellence has the man who gives only as he receives, acknowledges only those who salute him with respect, loves only as he is loved? Even the publicans^q did that much. Of the disciples of Christ much more was expected. The admonition closing this division of the discourse is an effective and comprehensive summary of all that had preceded: "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*"^r

^o Compare Lev. 19:18; Deut. 23:8; and Psa. 41:10.

^p Compare the lesson taught in the Parable of the Tares, Matt. 13:24-30.

^q Note 4, end of chapter; see also pages 193 and 201.

^r Note 5, end of chapter.

SINCERITY OF PURPOSE.^s

In the matter of alms-giving the Master warned against, and inferentially denounced, ostentation and hypocritical display. To give to the needy is praiseworthy ; but to give for the purpose of winning the praise of men is rank hypocrisy. The tossing of alms to a beggar, the pouring of offerings into the temple treasure chests, to be seen of men,^t and similar displays of affected liberality, were fashionable among certain classes in the time of Christ ; and the same spirit is manifest today. Some there be now who cause a trumpet to be sounded, through the columns of the press perchance, or by other means of publicity, to call attention to their giving, that they may have glory of men—to win political favor, to increase their trade or influence, to get what in their estimation is worth more than that from which they part. With logical incisiveness the Master demonstrated that such givers have their reward. They have received what they bid for ; what more can such men demand or consistently expect ? *“But,” said the Lord, “when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.”*

In the same spirit did the Preacher denounce hypocritical prayers—the saying of prayers in place of praying. There were many who sought places of public resort, in the synagogues, and even on the street-corners, that they might be seen and heard of men when saying their prayers. They secured the publicity they sought ; what more could they ask ? *“Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.”* He who would really pray—pray as nearly as possible as Christ prayed, pray in actual communion with God to whom the prayer is addressed—will seek privacy, seclusion, isola-

^s Matt. 6:1-18; compare Luke 11:2-4; B. of M., 3 Nephi 13:1-18.

^t Consider the incident of the gifts of the rich and the widow's mite, Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4.

tion; if opportunity permits he will retire to his chamber, and will shut the door, that none may intrude; there he may pray indeed, if the spirit of prayer be in his heart; and this course was commended by the Lord. Wordy supplications, made up largely of iterations and repetitions such as the heathen use, thinking that their idol deities will be pleased with their much speaking, were forbidden.

It is well to know that prayer is not compounded of words, words that may fail to express what one desires to say, words that so often cloak inconsistencies, words that may have no deeper source than the physical organs of speech, words that may be spoken to impress mortal ears. The dumb may pray, and that too with the eloquence that prevails in heaven. Prayer is made up of heart throbs and the righteous yearnings of the soul, of supplication based on the realization of need, of contrition and pure desire. If there lives a man who has never really prayed, that man is a being apart from the order of the divine in human nature, a stranger in the family of God's children. Prayer is for the uplifting of the suppliant. God without our prayers would be God; but we without prayer cannot be admitted to the kingdom of God. So did Christ instruct: "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

Then gave He unto those who sought wisdom at His feet, a model prayer, saying: "After this manner therefore pray ye:

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name." In this we acknowledge the relation we bear to our Heavenly Father, and while reverencing His great and holy Name, we avail ourselves of the inestimable privilege of approaching Him, less with the thought of His infinite glory as the Creator of all that is, the Supreme Being above all creation, than with the loving realization that He is Father, and that we are His children. This is the earliest Biblical scripture giving instruction, permission, or warrant, for ad-

dressing God directly as "Our Father". Therein is expressed the reconciliation which the human family, estranged through sin, may attain by the means provided through the well beloved Son. This instruction is equally definite in demonstrating the brotherhood between Christ and humanity. As He prayed so pray we to the same Father, we as brethren and Christ as our Elder Brother.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." The kingdom of God is to be a kingdom of order, in which toleration and the recognition of individual rights shall prevail. One who really prays that this kingdom come will strive to hasten its coming by living according to the law of God. His effort will be to keep himself in harmony with the order of the kingdom, to subject the flesh to the spirit, selfishness to altruism, and to learn to love the things that God loves. To make the will of God supreme on earth as it is in heaven is to be allied with God in the affairs of life. There are many who profess belief that as God is omnipotent, all that is is according to His will. Such a supposition is unscriptural, unreasonable, and untrue.* Wickedness is not in harmony with His will; falsehood, hypocrisy, vice and crime are not God's gifts to man. By His will these monstrosities that have developed as hideous deformities in human nature and life shall be abolished, and this blessed consummation shall be reached when by choice, without surrender or abrogation of their free agency, men shall do the will of God.

"Give us this day our daily bread." Food is indispensable to life. As we need it we should ask for it. True, the Father knows our need before we ask, but by asking we acknowledge Him as the Giver, and are made humble, grateful, contrite, and reliant by the request. Though the sun shines and the rain falls alike upon the just and the unjust, the righteous man is grateful for these blessings; the un-

godly man receives the benefits as a matter of course with a soul incapable of gratitude. The capacity to be grateful is a blessing, for the possession of which we should be further grateful. We are taught to pray day by day for the food we need, not for a great store to be laid by for the distant future. Israel in the desert received manna as a daily supply,^v and were kept in mind of their reliance upon Him who gave. The man with much finds it easier to forget his dependence than he who must ask with each succeeding day of need.

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” He who can thus pray with full intent and unmixed purpose merits forgiveness. In this specification of personal supplication we are taught to expect only as we deserve. The selfish and sinful would rejoice in exemption from their lawful debts, but being selfish and sinful would exact the last farthing from those who owe them.^w Forgiveness is too precious a pearl to be cast at the feet of the unforgiving;^x and, without the sincerity that springs from a contrite heart, no man may justly claim mercy. If others owe us, either in actual money or goods as suggested by debts and debtors, or through some infringement upon our rights included under the broader designation as a trespass, our mode of dealing with them will be taken into righteous account in the judgment of our own offenses.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:” The first part of this petition has occasioned comment and question. We are not to understand that God would ever lead a man into temptation except, perhaps, by way of wise permission, to test and prove him, thereby affording him opportunity of overcoming and so of gaining spiritual strength, which is the only true advancement in man’s eternal course of progress. The one purpose of pro-

^v Exo. 16:16-21.

^w Note the lesson of the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Matt. 18: 23-25.

^x Compare Matt. 7:6.

viding bodies for the preexistent spirits of the race, and of advancing them to the mortal state, was to "prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them."^y The plan of mortality involved the certainty of temptation. The intent of the supplication appears to be that we be preserved from temptation beyond our weak powers to withstand; that we be not abandoned to temptation without the divine support that shall be as full a measure of protection as our exercise of choice will allow.

How inconsistent then to go, as many do, into the places where the temptations to which we are most susceptible are strongest; for the man beset with a passion for strong drink to so pray and then resort to the dramshop; for the man whose desires are lustful to voice such a prayer and then go where lust is kindled; for the dishonest man, though he say the prayer, to then place himself where he knows the opportunity to steal will be found! Can such souls as these be other than hypocrites in asking God to deliver them from the evils they have sought? Temptation will fall in our way without our seeking, and evil will present itself even when we desire most to do right; for deliverance from such we may pray with righteous expectation and assurance.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Herein we acknowledge the supremacy of the Being whom we addressed at the beginning as Father. He is the Almighty in whom and through whose provision we live and move and have our existence.^z To assert independence of God is both sacrilege and blasphemy; to acknowledge Him is a filial duty and a just confession of His majesty and dominion. The Lord's Prayer is closed with a solemn "Amen," set as a seal to the document of the supplication, attesting its genuineness as the true expression of the suppliant's soul; gathering within the compass of a word

^y P. of G. P., Abraham 3:25; see pages 14, 15, herein.

^z Acts 17:28.

the meaning of all that has been uttered or thought. *So let it be* is the literal signification of *Amen*.

From the subject of prayer the Master turned to that of fasting, and emphasized the important truth that to be of avail fasting must be a matter between the man and his God, not between man and his kind. It was a common thing in the Master's day to see men parading the fact of their abstinence as an advertisement of their assumed piety.^a That they might appear haggard and faint, this class of hypocrites disfigured their faces, went with unkempt hair, gazed about with sad countenances. Of these also the Lord said, "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." Believers were admonished to fast secretly, with no outward display, and to fast unto God, who could see in secret and would heed their sacrifice and prayer.

TREASURES OF EARTH AND OF HEAVEN.^b

The transitory character of worldly wealth was next contrasted with the enduring riches of eternity. Many there were and many there are whose principal effort in life has been that of amassing treasures of earth, the mere possession of which entails responsibility, care, and disturbing anxiety. Some kinds of wealth are endangered by the ravages of moths, such as silks and velvets, satins and furs; some are destroyed by corrosion and rust—silver and copper and steel; while these and others are not infrequently made the booty of thieves. Infinitely more precious are the treasures of a life well spent, the wealth of good deeds, the account of which is kept in heaven, where the riches of righteous achievement are safe from moth, rust, and robbers. Then followed the trenchant lesson: "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*"

^a Compare the instance connected with the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, Luke 18:10-14.

^b Matt. 6:19-34; compare Luke 12:24-34; 16:13; 18:22; B. of M., 3 Nephi 13:19-34.

Spiritual light is shown to be greater than any product of physical illuminants. What does the brightest light avail the man who is blind? It is the bodily eye that discerns the light of the candle, the lamp, or the sun; and the spiritual eye sees by spiritual light; if then man's spiritual eye be single, that is, pure and undimmed by sin, he is filled with the light that shall show him the way to God; whereas if his soul's eye be evil, he will be as one full of darkness. Solemn caution is expressed in the summary, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Those whom the Master was addressing had received of the light of God; the degree of belief they had already professed was proof of that. Should they turn from the great emprise on which they had embarked, the light would be lost, and the succeeding darkness would be denser than that from which they had been relieved.^c There was to be no indecision among the disciples. No one of them could serve two masters; if he professed so to do he would be an untrue servant to the one or the other. Then followed another profound generalization: "*Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*"^d

They were told to trust the Father for what they needed, taking no thought of food, drink, clothing, or even of life itself, for all these were to be supplied by means above their power to control. With the wisdom of a Teacher of teachers, the Master appealed to their hearts and their understanding by citing the lessons of nature, in language of such simple yet forceful eloquence that to amplify or condense it is but to mar:

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they

^c Luke 11:34-36.

^d Compare Gal. 1:10; 1 Tim. 6:17; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15.

spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

The weakness of faith was reproved in the reminder that the Father who cared even for the grass of the field, which one day flourishes and on the next is gathered up to be burned, would not fail to remember His own. Therefore the Master added: "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*"

HYPOCRISY FURTHER CONDEMNED.^e

Men are prone to judge their fellows and to praise or censure without due consideration of fact or circumstance. On prejudiced or unsupported judgment the Master set His disapproval. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," He admonished, for, according to one's own standard of judging others, shall he himself be judged. The man who is always ready to correct his brother's faults, to remove the mote from his neighbor's eye so that that neighbor may see things as the interested and interfering friend would have him see, was denounced as a hypocrite. What was the speck in his neighbor's vision to the obscuring beam in his own eye? Have the centuries between the days of Christ and our own time made us less eager to cure the defective vision of those who cannot or will not assume our point of view, and see things as we see them?

These disciples, some of whom were soon to minister in the authority of the Holy Apostleship, were cautioned against the indiscreet and indiscriminate scattering of the sacred truths and precepts committed to them. Their duty would be to discern the spirits of those whom they essayed to teach, and to impart unto them in wisdom. The words of the Master were strong: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they

^e Matt. 7:1-5; Luke 6:37, 38, 41, 42; compare B. of M., 3 Nephi 14:1-5.

trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."^f

PROMISE AND REASSURANCE.^g

That their supplications would be heard and answered followed as a rich promise. They were to ask and they would receive; they were to knock and the door would be opened. Surely the Heavenly Father would not be less considerate than a human parent; and what father would answer his son's plea for bread by giving him a stone, or who would give a serpent when a fish was desired? With greater certainty would God bestow good gifts upon those who asked according to their need, in faith. "*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*"

The straight and narrow way by which man may walk in Godliness was compared with the broad highway leading to destruction. False prophets were to be shunned, such as were then among the people, comparable in their pretense to sheep, and in their reality to ravening wolves. These were to be recognized by their works and the results thereof, even as a tree is to be judged as good or bad according to its fruit. A thorn bush does not produce grapes, nor can thistles bear figs. Conversely, it is as truly impossible for a good tree to produce evil fruit as for a useless and corrupt tree to bring forth good fruit.

Religion is more than the confession and profession of the lips. Jesus averred that in the day of judgment many would pretend allegiance to Him, saying: "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Only by doing

^f Matt. 7:6; compare B. of M., 3 Nephi 14:6.

^g Matt. 7:7-23; Luke 6:43-44, 46; 11:9-13; 13:24-30; compare B. of M., 3 Nephi 14:7-23.

the will of the Father is the saving grace of the Son obtainable. To assume to speak and act in the name of the Lord without the bestowal of authority, such as the Lord alone can give, is to add sacrilege to hypocrisy. Even miracles wrought will be no vindication of the claims of those who pretend to minister in the ordinances of the gospel while devoid of the authority of the Holy Priesthood.^h

HEARING AND DOING.ⁱ

The Sermon on the Mount has stood through all the years since its delivery without another to be compared with it. No mortal man has ever since preached a discourse of its kind. The spirit of the address is throughout that of sincerity and action, as opposed to empty profession and neglect. In the closing sentences the Lord showed the uselessness of hearing alone, as contrasted with the efficacy of doing. The man who hears and acts is likened unto the wise builder who set the foundation of his house upon a rock; and in spite of rain and hurricane and flood, the house stood. He that hears and obeys not is likened unto the foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and when rain fell, or winds blew, or floods came, behold it fell, and great was the fall thereof.

Such doctrines as these astonished the people. For His distinctive teachings the Preacher had cited no authority but His own. His address was free from any array of rabbinical precedents; the law was superseded by the gospel: "*For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*"

NOTES TO CHAPTER 17.

I. Time and Place of the Sermon on the Mount.—Matthew gives the address early mention, placing it even before the record of his own call from the seat of custom—which call certainly preceded the ordination of the Twelve as a body—and before his account of many sayings and doings of the Lord already considered in these pages. Luke's partial summary of the sermon

^h "Articles of Faith," x:1-20; and xii:1-30.

ⁱ Matt. 7:24-29; Luke 6:46-49; compare B. of M., 3 Nephi 14:24-27.

follows his record of the ordination of the apostles. Matthew tells us that Jesus had gone up the mountain and that He sat while speaking; Luke's account suggests the inference that Jesus and the Twelve first descended from the mountain heights to a plain, where they were met by the multitude, and that Jesus preached unto them, standing. Critics who rejoice in trifles, often to the neglect of weightier matters, have tried to make much of these seeming variations. Is it not probable that Jesus spoke at length on the mountain-side to the disciples then present, and from whom He had chosen the Twelve, and that after finishing His discourse to them He descended with them to the plain where a multitude had assembled, and that to these He repeated parts of what He had before spoken? The relative fulness of Matthew's report may be due to the fact that he, as one of the Twelve, was present at the first and more extended delivery.

2. Pleasure Versus Happiness.—“The present is an age of pleasure-seeking, and men are losing their sanity in the mad rush for sensations that do but excite and disappoint. In this day of counterfeits, adulterations, and base imitations, the devil is busier than he has ever been in the course of human history, in the manufacture of pleasures, both old and new; and these he offers for sale in most attractive fashion, falsely labeled, *Happiness*. In this soul-destroying craft he is without a peer; he has had centuries of experience and practise, and by his skill he controls the market. He has learned the tricks of the trade, and knows well how to catch the eye and arouse the desire of his customers. He puts up the stuff in bright-colored packages, tied with tinsel string and tassel; and crowds flock to his bargain counters, hustling and crushing one another in their frenzy to buy.

“Follow one of the purchasers as he goes off gloatingly with his gaudy packet, and watch him as he opens it. What finds he inside the gilded wrapping? He has expected fragrant happiness, but uncovers only an inferior brand of pleasure, the stench of which is nauseating.

“Happiness includes all that is really desirable and of true worth in pleasure, and much beside. Happiness is genuine gold, pleasure but gilded brass, which corrodes in the hand, and is soon converted into poisonous verdigris. Happiness is as the genuine diamond, which, rough or polished, shines with its own inimitable luster; pleasure is as the paste imitation that glows only when artificially embellished. Happiness is as the ruby, red as the heart's blood, hard and enduring; pleasure, as stained glass, soft, brittle, and of but transitory beauty.

“Happiness is true food, wholesome, nutritious and sweet; it builds up the body and generates energy for action, physical, mental and spiritual; pleasure is but a deceiving stimulant which, like spirituous drink, makes one think he is strong when in reality enfeebled; makes him fancy he is well when in fact stricken with deadly malady.

“Happiness leaves no bad after-taste, it is followed by no

depressing reaction; it calls for no repentance, brings no regret, entails no remorse; pleasure too often makes necessary repentance, contrition, and suffering; and, if indulged to the extreme, it brings degradation and destruction.

"True happiness is lived over and over again in memory, always with a renewal of the original good; a moment of unholy pleasure may leave a barbed sting, which, like a thorn in the flesh, is an ever-present source of anguish.

"Happiness is not akin with levity, nor is it one with light-minded mirth. It springs from the deeper fountains of the soul, and is not infrequently accompanied by tears. Have you never been so happy that you have had to weep? I have."—From an article by the author, *Improvement Era*, vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 172, 173.

3. Salt of the Earth.—Dummelow's *Commentary*, on Matt. 5:13, states: "Salt in Palestine, being gathered in an impure state, often undergoes chemical changes by which its flavor is destroyed while its appearance remains." Perhaps a reasonable interpretation of the expression, "if the salt have lost his savor," may be suggested by the fact that salt mixed with insoluble impurities may be dissolved out by moisture, leaving the insoluble residue but slightly salty. The lesson of the Lord's illustration is that spoiled salt is of no use as a preservative. The corresponding passage in the sermon delivered by Jesus to the Nephites after His resurrection reads: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the salt of the earth; but if the salt shall lose its savor, wherewith shall the earth be salted? The salt shall be thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (3 Nephi 12:13.)

4. Reference to Publicans.—Observe that Matthew, who had been a publican, frankly records this reference (5:46, 47) to his despized class. Luke writes "sinners" instead of "publicans" (6:32-34). Of course, if the accounts of the two writers refer to separate addresses (see Note 1, above), both may be accurate. But we find Matthew's designation of himself as a publican in his list of the apostles (10:3) and the considerate omission of the unenviable title by the other evangelists (Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15).

5. Relative Perfection.—Our Lord's admonition to men to become perfect, even as the Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48) cannot rationally be construed otherwise than as implying the possibility of such achievement. Plainly, however, man cannot become perfect in mortality in the sense in which God is perfect as a supremely glorified Being. It is possible, though, for man to be perfect in his sphere in a sense analogous to that in which superior intelligences are perfect in their several spheres; yet the relative perfection of the lower is infinitely inferior to that of the higher. A college student in his freshman or sophomore year may be perfect as freshman or sophomore; his record may possibly be a hundred per cent on the scale of efficiency and achievement; yet the honors of the upper classman are beyond him, and the attainment of graduation is to him remote, but of assured possibility, if he do but continue faithful and devoted to the end.

CHAPTER 18.

AS ONE HAVING AUTHORITY.

Matthew's account of the invaluable address, known to us as the Sermon on the Mount, is closed with a forceful sentence of his own, referring to the effect of the Master's words upon the people: "For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."^a A striking characteristic of Christ's ministry was the entire absence of any claim of human authorization for His words or deeds; the commission He professed to have was that of the Father who sent Him. His addresses, whether delivered to multitudes or spoken in relative privacy to few, were free from the labored citations in which the teachers of the day delighted. His authoritative "I say unto you" took the place of invocation of authority and exceeded any possible array of precedent commandment or deduction. In this His words differed essentially from the erudite utterances of scribes, Pharisees and rabbis. Throughout His ministry, inherent power and authority were manifest over matter and the forces of nature, over men and demons, over life and death. It now becomes our purpose to consider a number of instances in which the Lord's power was demonstrated in divers mighty works.

THE CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED.^b

From the Mount of Beatitudes Jesus returned to Capernaum, whether directly or by a longer way marked by other works of power and mercy is of little importance. There was at that time a Roman garrison in the city. A military officer, a centurion or captain of a hundred men, was stationed there. Attached to the household of this officer was

^a Matt. 7:29; compare Luke 4:32; John 7:46.

^b Luke 7:1-10; compare Matt. 8:5-13.

an esteemed servant, who was ill, "and ready to die." The centurion had faith that Christ could heal his servant, and invoked the intercession of the Jewish elders to beg of the Master the boon desired. These elders implored Jesus most earnestly, and urged the worthiness of the man, who, though a Gentile, loved the people of Israel and out of his munificence had built for them a synagog in the town. Jesus went with the elders, but the centurion, probably learning of the approach of the little company, hastily sent other envoys to say that he did not consider himself worthy to have Jesus enter his home, from which sense of unworthiness he had not ventured to make his request in person.^c "But," ran the message of supplication, "say in a word, and my servant shall be healed." We may well contrast this man's conception of Christ's power with that of the nobleman of the same town, who had requested Jesus to hasten in person to the side of his dying son.^d

The centurion seems to have reasoned in this way: He himself was a man of authority, though under the direction of superior officers. To his subordinates he gave orders which were obeyed. He did not find it necessary to personally attend to the carrying out of his instructions. Surely One who had such power as Jesus possessed could command and be obeyed. Moreover, the man may have heard of the marvelous restoration of the nobleman's dying son, in accomplishing which the Lord spoke the effective word when miles away from the sufferer's bed. That the centurion's trust and confidence, his belief and faith, were genuine, is not to be doubted, since Jesus expressly commended the same. The afflicted one was healed. Jesus is said to have marveled^e at the centurion's manifestation of faith, and, turning to the people who followed, He thus spake: "I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." This re-

^c Note 1, end of chapter.

^d John 4:46-53; see page 177.

^e Note 2, end of chapter.

mark may have caused some of the listeners to wonder ; the Jews were unaccustomed to hear the faith of a Gentile so extolled, for, according to the traditionalism of the day, a Gentile, even though an earnest proselyte to Judaism, was accounted essentially inferior to even the least worthy of the chosen people. Our Lord's comment plainly indicated that Gentiles would be preferred in the kingdom of God if they excelled in worthiness. Turning to Matthew's record we find this additional teaching, introduced as usual with "I say unto you"—"That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."^f This lesson, that the supremacy of Israel can be attained only through excellence in righteousness, is reiterated and enlarged upon in the Lord's teachings, as we shall see.

A YOUNG MAN OF NAIN RAISED FROM THE DEAD.^g

On the day after that of the miracle last considered, Jesus went to the little town of Nain, and, as usual, many people accompanied Him. This day witnessed what in human estimation was a wonder greater than any before wrought by Him. He had already healed many, sometimes by a word spoken to afflicted ones present, and again when He was far from the subject of His beneficent power ; bodily diseases had been overcome, and demons had been rebuked at His command ; but, though the sick who were nigh unto death had been saved from the grave, we have no earlier record of our Lord having commanded dread death itself to give back one it had claimed.^h As Jesus and His followers approached the town, they met a funeral cortege of many people ; the

^f Matt. 8:11, 12; see also Luke 13:28, 29; compare Acts 10:45.

^g Luke 7:11-17.

^h Note 3, end of chapter.

only son of a widow was being borne to the tomb; the body was carried according to the custom of the day on an open bier. Our Lord looked with compassion upon the sorrowing mother, now bereft of both husband and son; and, feeling in Himselfⁱ the pain of her grief, He said in gentle tone, "Weep not." He touched the stretcher upon which the dead man lay, and the bearers stood still. Then addressing the corpse He said: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." And the dead heard the voice of Him who is Lord of all,^j and immediately sat up and spoke. Graciously Jesus delivered the young man to his mother. We read without wonder that there came a fear on all who were present, and that they glorified God, testifying that a great prophet was amongst them and that God has visited His people. Reports of this miracle were carried throughout the land, and even reached the ears of John the Baptist, who was confined in the prison of Herod. The effect of the information conveyed to John concerning this and other mighty works of Christ, now claims our attention.

JOHN BAPTIST'S MESSAGE TO JESUS.

Even before Jesus had returned to Galilee after His baptism and the forty days of solitude in the wilderness, John the Baptist had been imprisoned by order of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea.^k During the subsequent months of our Lord's activities, in preaching the gospel, teaching the true significance of the kingdom, reproofing sin, healing the afflicted, rebuking evil spirits and even raising the dead to life, His forerunner, the God-fearing, valiant John, had lain a prisoner in the dungeons of Machærus, one of the strongest of Herod's citadels!^l

ⁱ Matt. 8:17; compare Isa. 53:4.

^j Luke 20:36, 38; compare Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5; Rom. 14:9.

^k Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 3:19, 20; see Note 2, chap. 9, page 119, and Note 4, end of this chapter.

^l Note 5, end of chapter.

The tetrarch had some regard for John, having found him to be a holy man ; and many things had Herod done on the direct advice of the Baptist or because of the influence of the latter's general teaching. Indeed, Herod had listened to John gladly, and had imprisoned him through a reluctant yielding to the importunities of Herodias, whom Herod claimed as a wife under cover of an illegal marriage. Herodias had been and legally was still the wife of Herod's brother Philip, from whom she had never been lawfully divorced ; and her pretended marriage to Herod Antipas was both adulterous and incestuous under Jewish law. The Baptist had fearlessly denounced this sinful association ; to Herod he had said : "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." Though Herod might possibly have ignored this stern rebuke, or at least might have allowed it to pass without punishment, Herodias would not condone. It was she, not the tetrarch, who most hated John ; she "had a quarrel against him," and succeeded in inducing Herod to have the Baptist seized and incarcerated as a step toward the consummation of her vengeful plan of having him put to death.^m Moreover, Herod feared an uprising of the people in the event of John being slain by his order.ⁿ

In the course of his long imprisonment John had heard much of the marvelous preaching and works of Christ ; these things must have been reported to him by some of his disciples and friends who were allowed to visit him.^o Particularly was he informed of the miraculous raising of the young man at Nain ;^p and forthwith he commissioned two of his disciples to bear a message of inquiry to Jesus.^q These came to Christ and reported the purpose of their visit thus : "John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come ?

^m Mark 6:17-20.

ⁿ Matt. 14:5.

^o Matt. 11:2. Note a similar liberty allowed to Paul when in durance, Acts 24:23.

^p Luke 7:18; Matt. 11:2.

^q Matt. 11:2-6; Luke 7:18-23.

or look we for another?" The messengers found Jesus engaged in beneficent ministrations; and, instead of giving an immediate reply in words, He continued His labor, relieving in that same hour many who were afflicted by blindness or infirmities, or who were troubled by evil spirits. Then, turning to the two who had communicated the Baptist's question, Jesus said: "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

The words of John's inquiring disciples were answered by wondrous deeds of beneficence and mercy. When the reply was reported to John, the imprisoned prophet could scarcely have failed to remember the predictions of Isaiah, that by those very tokens of miracle and blessing should the Messiah be known;^r and the reproof must have been convincing and convicting as he called to mind his own citations of Isaiah's prophecies, when he had proclaimed in fiery, withering eloquence the fulfilment of those earlier predictions in his own mission and in that of the Mightier One to whom he had borne personal testimony.^s

The concluding sentence of our Lord's answer to John was the climax of what had preceded, and a further though yet gentle rebuke of the Baptist's defective comprehension of the Messiah's mission. "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," said the Lord. Misunderstanding is the prelude to offense. Gaged by the standard of the then current conception of what the Messiah would be, the work of Christ must have appeared to many as failure; and those who were looking for some sudden manifestation of His power in the conquest of Israel's oppressors and the rehabilitation of the house of David in worldly splendor, grew impatient, then

^r Isa. 35:5, 6.

^s Matt. 3:3; compare Isa. 40:3; Matt. 3:7; compare Isa. 59:5; Luke 3:6; compare Isa. 52:10.

doubtful; afterward they took offense and were in danger of turning in open rebellion against their Lord. Christ has been an offender to many because they, being out of harmony with His words and works, have of themselves taken offense.^t

John's situation must be righteously considered by all who assume to render judgment as to his purpose in sending to inquire of Christ, "Art thou he that should come?" John thoroughly understood that his own work was that of preparation; he had so testified and had openly borne witness that Jesus was the One for whom he had been sent to prepare. With the inauguration of Christ's ministry, John's influence had waned, and for many months he had been shut up in a cell, chafing under his enforced inactivity, doubtless yearning for the freedom of the open, and for the locusts and wild honey of the desert. Jesus was increasing while he decreased in popularity, influence, and opportunity; and he had affirmed that such condition was inevitable.^u

But, left in prison, he may have become despondent, and may have permitted himself to wonder whether that Mightier One had forgotten him. He knew that were Jesus to speak the word of command the prison of Machaerus could no longer hold him; nevertheless Jesus seemed to have abandoned him to his fate, which comprised not only confinement but other indignities, and physical torture.^v It may have been a part of John's purpose to call Christ's attention to his pitiable plight; and in this respect his message was rather a reminder than a plain inquiry based on actual doubt. Indeed, we have good grounds for inference that John's purpose in sending disciples to inquire of Christ was partly, and perhaps largely, designed to confirm in those disciples an

^t Matt. 13:57; 24:10; 26:31; Mark 6:3; 14:27; John 6:61. Note 6, end of chapter.

^u John 3:30.

^v Note that Jesus compared the sufferings of John while in prison as in part comparable to those He would Himself have to endure, in that they did unto John "whatsoever they listed" (Matt. 17:12; Mark 9:13).

abiding faith in the Christ. The commission with which they were charged brought them into direct communication with the Lord, whose supremacy they could not well fail to comprehend. They were personal witnesses of His power and authority.

Our Lord's commentary on John's message indicated that the Baptist had no full understanding of what the spiritual kingdom of God comprised. After the envoys had departed, Jesus addressed Himself to the people who had witnessed the interview. He would not have them underrate the importance of the Baptist's service.^w He reminded them of the time of John's popularity, when some of those then present, and multitudes of others, had gone into the wilderness to hear the prophet's stern admonition; and they had found him to be no reed, shaken by the wind, but a firm and unbending oak. They had not gone to see a man in fashionable attire; those who wore soft raiment were to be looked for in the court of the king, not in the wilderness, nor in the dungeon where John now lay. They had found in John a prophet indeed, yea, more than a prophet; "For," affirmed the Lord, "I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."^x What stronger testimony of the Baptist's integrity is needed? Other prophets had told of the Messiah's coming, but John had seen Him, had baptized Him, and had been to Jesus as a body servant to his master. Nevertheless from the day of John's preaching to the time at which Christ then spoke, the kingdom of heaven had been rejected with violence, and this even though all the prophets and even the fundamental law had told of its coming, and though both John and Christ had been abundantly predicted.

Concerning John, the Lord continued: "And if ye will

^w Luke 7:24-30; see also Matt. 11:7-14; compare Christ's testimony of John Baptist delivered at Jerusalem, John 5:33-35.

^x Luke 7:28; see Note 7, end of chapter.

receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."^y It is important to know that the designation, Elias, here applied by Jesus to the Baptist, is a title rather than a personal name, and that it has no reference to Elijah, the ancient prophet called the Tishbite.^z Many of those who heard the Lord's eulogy on the Baptist rejoiced, for they had accepted John, and had turned from him to Jesus as from the lesser to the Greater, as from the priest to the great High Priest, as from the herald to the King. But Pharisees and lawyers were present, those of the class that John had so vehemently denounced as of a generation of vipers, and those who had rejected the counsel of God in refusing to heed the Baptist's call to repentance.^a

At this point the Master resorted to analogy to make His meaning clearer. He compared the unbelieving and dissatisfied generation to fickle children at play, disagreeing among themselves. Some wanted to enact the pageantry of a mock wedding, and though they piped the rest would not dance; then they changed to a funeral procession and essayed the part of mourners, but the others would not weep as the rules of the game required. Ever critical, ever skeptical, by nature fault-finders and defamers, hard of hearing and of heart, they grumbled. John the Baptist had come amongst them like the eremitic prophets of old, as strict as any Nazarite, refusing to eat with the merry-makers or drink with the convivial, and they had said "He hath a devil." Now came the Son of Man,^b without austerity or hermit ways, eating and drinking as a normal man would do, a guest at the houses of the people, a participant in the festivities of a marriage party, mingling alike with the publicans and the Pharisees—and they complained again, saying: "Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of pub-

^y Matt. 11:12-15; compare 17:12; Luke 1:17.

^z Note 8, end of chapter.

^a Matt. 3:7; Luke 7:30.

^b Page 142.

licans and sinners!" The Master explained that such inconsistency, such wicked trifling with matters most sacred, such determined opposition to truth, would surely be revealed in their true light, and the worthlessness of boasted learning would appear. "But," said He, "wisdom is justified of all her children."

From reproof for unbelieving individuals He turned to unappreciative communities, and upbraided the cities in which He had wrought so many mighty works, and wherein the people repented not: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."^c

Seemingly faint at heart over the unbelief of the people, Jesus sought strength in prayer.^d With the eloquence of soul for which one looks in vain save in the anguish-laden communion of Christ with His Father, He voiced His reverent gratitude that God had imparted a testimony of the truth to the humble and simple rather than to the learned and great; though misunderstood by men He was known for what He really was by the Father. Turning again to the people, He urged anew their acceptance of Him and His gospel, and His invitation is one of the grandest outpourings of spiritual emotion known to man: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek

^c Matt. 11:20-24; compare Luke 10:13-15.

^d Matt. 11:25-27; compare Luke 10:21, 22.

and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."^e He invited them from drudgery to pleasant service; from the well-nigh unbearable burdens of ecclesiastical exactions and traditional formalism, to the liberty of truly spiritual worship; from slavery to freedom; but they would not. The gospel He offered them was the embodiment of liberty, but not of license; it entailed obedience and submission; but even if such could be likened unto a yoke, what was its burden in comparison with the incubus under which they groaned?

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Reverting to John Baptist in his dungeon solitude, we are left without information as to how he received and understood the reply to his inquiry, as brought by his messengers. His captivity was destined soon to end, though not by restoration to liberty on earth. The hatred of Herodias increased against him. An opportunity for carrying into effect her fiendish plots against his life soon appeared.^f The king celebrated his birthday by a great feast, to which his lords, high captains, and the principal officials of Galilee were bidden. To grace the occasion, Salome, daughter of Herodias though not of Herod, came in and danced before the company. So enchanted were Herod and his guests that the king bade the damsel ask whatever she would, and he swore he would give it unto her, even though the gift were half of his kingdom.

She retired to consult her mother as to what she should ask, and, being instructed, returned with the appalling demand: "I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist." The king was astounded; his amazement was followed by sorrow and regret; nevertheless he dreaded the humiliation that would follow a violation of

^e Matt. 11:28-30.

^f Mark 6:21-29.

the oath he had sworn in the presence of his court ; so, summoning an executioner, he immediately gave the fatal order ; and John was forthwith beheaded in the dungeon. The headsman returned, carrying a dish in which lay the ghastly trophy of the corrupt queen's vengeance. The bloody gift was delivered to Salome, who carried it with inhuman triumph to her mother. Some of John's disciples came, secured the corpse, laid it in a tomb ; and bore the tidings of his death to Jesus. Herod was sorely troubled over the murder he had ordered ; and when, later, the marvels wrought by Jesus were reported to him, he was afraid, and said : "That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him." To those who dissented, the terrified king replied : "It is John, whom I beheaded : he is risen from the dead."^g

So ended the life of the prophet-priest, the direct precursor of the Christ ; thus was stilled the mortal voice of him who had cried so mightily in the wilderness : "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." After many centuries his voice has been heard again, as the voice of one redeemed and resurrected ; and the touch of his hand has again been felt, in this the dispensation of restoration and fulness. In May, 1829, a resurrected personage appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, announced himself as John, known of old as the Baptist, laid his hands upon the two young men, and conferred upon them the priesthood of Aaron, which comprises authority to preach and minister the gospel of repentance and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.^h

IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE PHARISEE.

"And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat."ⁱ

^g Mark 6:14-18.

^h "Articles of Faith," x:18; also chapter 41, herein.

ⁱ Luke 7:36; see further, verses 37-50.

From the place of this incident in Luke's narration of events, it appears that it may have occurred on the day of the visit of John's messengers. Jesus accepted the Pharisee's invitation, as He had accepted the invitations of others, including even publicans, and those called by the rabbis, sinners. His reception at Simon's house appears to have been somewhat lacking in warmth, hospitality and honorable attendance. The narrative suggests an attitude of condescension on the part of the host. It was the custom of the times to treat a distinguished guest with marked attention; to receive him with a kiss of welcome, to provide water for washing the dust from his feet, and oil for anointing the hair of the head and the beard. All these courteous attentions were omitted by Simon. Jesus took His place, probably on one of the divans or couches on which it was usual to partly sit, partly recline, while eating.^j Such an attitude would place the feet of the person outward from the table. In addition to these facts relating to the usages of the time it should be further remembered that dwellings were not protected against intrusion by such amenities of privacy as now prevail. It was not unusual at that time in Palestine for visitors and even strangers, usually men however, to enter a house at meal time, observe the procedure and even speak to the guests, all without bidding or invitation.

Among those who entered Simon's house while the meal was in progress, was a woman; and the presence of a woman, though somewhat unusual, was not strictly a social impropriety and could not well be forbidden on such an occasion. But this woman was one of the fallen class, a woman who had been unvirtuous, and who had to bear, as part of the penalty for her sins, outward scorn and practical ostracism from those who professed to be morally superior. She approached Jesus from behind, and bent low to kiss His feet as a mark of humility on her part and of respectful homage

^j Note 9, end of chapter.

to Him. She may have been one of those who had heard His gracious words, spoken possibly that day: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Whatever her motive in coming, she had certainly come in a repentant and deeply contrite state. As she leaned over the feet of Jesus her tears rained upon them. Seemingly oblivious of her surroundings and of disapproving eyes watching her movements, she shook out her tresses and wiped the Lord's feet with her hair. Then, opening an alabaster box of ointment, she anointed them, as a slave might do to his master. Jesus graciously permitted the woman to proceed unrebuked and uninterrupted in her humble service inspired by contrition and reverent love.

Simon had observed the whole proceeding; by some means he had knowledge as to the class to which this woman belonged; and though not aloud, within himself he said: "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner." Jesus read the man's thoughts, and thus spake: "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee," to which the Pharisee replied, "Master, say on." Jesus continued, "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" But one answer could be given with reason, and that Simon gave, though apparently with some hesitation or reserve. He possibly feared that he might involve himself. "I suppose," he ventured, "that he, to whom he forgave most." Jesus said, "Thou hast rightly judged," and proceeded: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not

anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

The Pharisee could not fail to note so direct a reminder of his having omitted the ordinary rites of respect to a specially invited guest. The lesson of the story had found its application in him, even as Nathan's parable had drawn from David the king a self-convicting answer.^k "Wherefore," Jesus continued, "I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Then to the woman He spake the words of blessed relief: "Thy sins are forgiven." Simon and the others at table murmured within themselves, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" Understanding their unspoken protest, Christ addressed the woman again, saying, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

The latter part of the narrative brings to mind another occasion on which Christ granted remission of sins, and because of opposition in the minds of some hearers, opposition none the less real because unvoiced, had supplemented His authoritative utterance by another pronouncement.^l

The name of the woman who thus came to Christ, and whose repentance was so sincere as to bring to her grateful and contrite soul the assurance of remission, is not recorded. There is no evidence that she figures in any other incident recorded in scripture. By certain writers she has been represented as the Mary of Bethany who, shortly before Christ's betrayal, anointed the head of Jesus with spikenard;^m but the assumption of identity is wholly unfounded,ⁿ and constitutes an unjustifiable reflection upon the earlier life of Mary, the devoted and loving sister of Martha and Lazarus. Equally wrong is the attempt made by others to identify this repentant and forgiven sinner with Mary Magdalene, no period of

^k 2 Sam. 12:1-7.

^l Matt. 9:2-6; Mark 2:5-7; page 191 herein.

^m Matt. 26:6, 7; Mark 14:3; John 11:2.

ⁿ Note 10, end of chapter.

whose life was marked by the sin of unchastity so far as the scriptures aver. The importance of guarding against mistakes in the identity of these women renders advisable the following addition to the foregoing treatment.

In the chapter following that in which are recorded the incidents last considered, Luke^o states that Jesus went throughout the region, visiting every city and village, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and showing the glad tidings thereof. With Him on this tour were the Twelve, and also "certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance." Further reference is made to some or all of these honorable women in connection with the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, and of Mary Magdalene particular mention appears.^p Mary Magdalene, whose second name is probably derived from her home town, Magdala, had been healed through the ministrations of Jesus from both physical and mental maladies, the latter having been associated with possession by evil spirits. Out of her we are told Christ had cast seven devils,^q but even such grievous affliction affords no warrant for the assertion that the woman was unvirtuous or unchaste.

Mary Magdalene became one of the closest friends Christ had among women; her devotion to Him as her Healer and as the One whom she adored as the Christ, was unswerving; she stood close by the cross while other women tarried afar off in the time of His mortal agony; she was among the first at the sepulchre on the resurrection morning, and was the first mortal to look upon and recognize a resurrected Being —the Lord whom she had loved with all the fervor of spir-

^o Luke 8:1-3.

^p Matt. 27:55, 56, 61; 28:1, 5; Mark 15:40, 47; 16:1, 9; Luke 23:49, 55; 24:10, 22; John 19:25; 20:1, 13, 18.

^q Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2.

itual adoration. To say that this woman, chosen from among women as deserving of such distinctive honors, was once a fallen creature, her soul seared by the heat of unhallowed lust, is to contribute to the perpetuating of an error for which there is no excuse. Nevertheless the false tradition, arising from early and unjustifiable assumption, that this noble woman, distinctively a friend of the Lord, is the same who, admittedly a sinner, washed and anointed the Savior's feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee and gained the boon of forgiveness through contrition, has so tenaciously held its place in the popular mind through the centuries, that the name, Magdalene, has come to be a generic designation for women who fall from virtue and afterward repent. We are not considering whether the mercy of Christ could have been extended to such a sinner as Mary of Magdala is wrongly reputed to have been; man cannot measure the bounds nor fathom the depths of divine forgiveness; and if it were so that this Mary and the repentant sinner who ministered to Jesus as He sat at the Pharisee's table were one and the same, the question would stand affirmatively answered, for that woman who had been a sinner was forgiven. We are dealing with the scriptural record as a history, and nothing said therein warrants the really repellent though common imputation of unchastity to the devoted soul of Mary Magdalene.

CHRIST'S AUTHORITY ASCRIBED TO BEELZEBUB.⁴

At the time of our Lord's earthly ministry, the curing of the blind, deaf, or dumb was regarded as among the greatest possible achievements of medical science or spiritual treatment; and the subjection or casting out of demons was ranked among the attainments impossible to rabbinical exorcism. Demonstrations of the Lord's power to heal and restore, even in cases universally considered as incurable, had the effect of

⁴ Matt. 12:24-45; compare 9:33, 34: see also Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11:14-26

intensifying the hostility of the sacerdotal classes; and they, represented by the Pharisaic party, evolved the wholly inconsistent and ridiculous suggestion that miracles were wrought by Jesus through the power of the prince of devils, with whom He was in league.^s

While the Lord was making His second missionary tour through Galilee, going about through "all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people,"^t the absurd theory that Christ was Himself a victim of demoniacal possession, and that He operated by the power of the devil, was urged and enlarged upon until it became the generally accepted explanation among the Pharisees and their kind. Jesus had withdrawn Himself for a time from the more populous centers, where He was constantly watched by emissaries, whom the ruling classes had sent from Jerusalem into Galilee; for the Pharisees were in conspiracy against Him, seeking excuse and opportunity to take His life; but even in the smaller towns and rural districts He was followed and beset by great multitudes, to whom He ministered for both physical and spiritual ailments.^u

He urged the people to refrain from spreading His fame; and this He may have done for the reason that at that stage of His work an open rupture with the Jewish hierarchy would have been a serious hindrance; or possibly He desired to leave the rulers, who were plotting against Him, time and opportunity to brew their bitter enmity and fill to the brim the flagons of their determined iniquity. Matthew sees in the Lord's injunctions against publicity a fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy that the chosen Messiah would not strive nor cry out on the street to attract attention, nor would He use His mighty power to crush even a bruised

^s Matt. 9:34.

^t Matt. 9:35.

^u Matt. 12:14-15.

reed, or to quench even the smoking flax; He would not fail nor be discouraged, but would victoriously establish just judgment upon the earth for the Gentiles, as well as, by implication, for Israel.^v The figure of the bruised reed and the smoking flax is strikingly expressive of the tender care with which Christ treated even the weakest manifestation of faith and genuine desire to learn the truth, whether exhibited by Jew or Gentile.

Soon after His return from the missionary tour referred to, an excuse for the Pharisees to assail Him was found in His healing of a man who was under the influence of a demon, and was both blind and dumb. This combination of sore afflictions, affecting body, mind, and spirit, was rebuked, and the sightless, speechless demoniac was relieved of his three-fold burden.^w At this triumph over the powers of evil the people were the more amazed and said: "Is not this the son of David?" in other words, Can this be any other than the Christ we have been so long expecting? The popular judgment so voiced maddened the Pharisees, and they told the almost adoring people: "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils." Jesus took up the malicious charge and replied thereto, not in anger but in terms of calm reason and sound logic. He laid the foundation of His defense by stating the evident truth that a kingdom divided against itself cannot endure but must surely suffer disruption. If their assumption were in the least degree founded on truth, Satan through Jesus would be opposing Satan. Then, referring to the superstitious practises and exorcisms of the time, by which some such effects as we class today under mind cures were obtained, He asked: "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges." And to make the demonstration plainer by contrast, He continued: "But if I cast out devils by the

^v Matt. 12:17-20; compare Isa. 42:1.

^w Matt. 12:22, 23.

Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." By the acceptance of either proposition, and surely one was true, for the fact that Jesus did cast out devils was known throughout the land and was conceded in the very terms of the charge now brought against Him, the accusing Pharisees stood defeated and condemned.

But the illustration went further. Jesus continued: "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house." Christ had attacked the stronghold of Satan, had driven his evil spirits from the human tabernacles of which they had unwarrantably taken possession; how could Christ have done this had He not first subdued the "strong man," the master of devils, Satan himself? And yet those ignorant scholars dared to say in the face of such self-evident refutation of their own premises, that the powers of Satan were subdued by Satanic agency. There could be no agreement, no truce nor armistice between the contending powers of Christ and Satan. Offering a suggestion of self-judgment to His accusers, that they might severally decide on which side they were aligned, Jesus added: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

Then, the demonstration being complete, and the absurdity of His opponents' assumption proved, Christ directed their thoughts to the heinous sin of condemning the power and authority by which Satan was overcome. He had proved to them on the basis of their own proposition that He, having subdued Satan, was the embodiment of the Spirit of God, and that through Him the kingdom of God was brought to them. They rejected the Spirit of God, and sought to destroy the Christ through whom that Spirit was made manifest. What blasphemy could be greater? Speaking as one having authority, with the solemn affirmation "I say unto you," He continued: "All manner of sin

and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

Who among men can word a more solemn and awful warning against the danger of committing the dread unpardonable sin?^x Jesus was merciful in His assurance that words spoken against Himself as a Man, might be forgiven; but to speak against the authority He possessed, and particularly to ascribe that power and authority to Satan, was very near to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, for which sin there could be no forgiveness. Then, in stronger terms, which developed into cutting invective, He told them to be consistent—if they admitted that the result of His labors was good, as the casting out of devils surely was, to be likened unto good fruit—why did they not acknowledge that the power by which such results were attained, in other words that the tree itself, was good? “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.” With burning words of certain conviction He continued: “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” By the truths He had made so plain it was evident that their accusing words were drawn from hearts stored with evil treasure. Moreover their words were shown to be not only malicious but foolish, idle and vain, and therefore doubly saturated with sin. Another authoritative declaration followed: “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

^x Note 11, end of chapter.

SEEKERS AFTER SIGNS.⁹

The Master's lesson, enforced though it was by illustration and analogy, by direct application, and by authoritative avowal, fell on ears that were practically deaf to spiritual truth, and found no place in hearts already stuffed with great stores of evil. To the profound wisdom and saving instruction of the word of God to which they had listened, they responded with a flippant request: "Master, we would see a sign from thee." Had they not already seen signs in profusion? Had not the blind and the deaf, the dumb and the infirm, the palsied and the dropsical, and people afflicted with all manner of diseases, been healed in their houses, on their streets, and in their synagogues; had not devils been cast out and their foul utterances been silenced by His word; and had not the dead been raised, and all by Him whom they now importuned for a sign? They would have some surpassing wonder wrought, to satisfy curiosity, or perhaps to afford them further excuse for action against Him—they wanted signs to waste on their lust.^z Small wonder, that "he sighed deeply in his spirit" when such demands were made.^a To the scribes and Pharisees who had shown such inattention to His words, He replied: "An evil and adulterous generation^b seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."

The sign of Jonas (or Jonah) was that for three days he had been in the belly of the fish and then had been restored to liberty; so would the Son of Man be immured in the tomb, after which He would rise again. That was the only sign He would give them, and by that would they stand condemned. Against them and their generation would the

^y Matt. 12:38-45; compare 16:1; Mark 8:11; Luke 11:16, 29; John 2:18; 1 Cor. 1:22.

^z Doc. and Cov. 46:9; compare 63:7-12.

^a Mark 8:12.

^b Note 12, end of chapter.

men of Nineveh rise in judgment, for they, wicked as they were, had repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas was among them.^c The queen of Sheba would rise in judgment against them, for she had journeyed far to avail herself of Solomon's wisdom; and behold a greater than Solomon stood before them.^d

Then, reverting to the matter of unclean and evil spirits, in connection with which they had spread the accusation that He was one of the devil's own, He told them, that when a demon is cast out, he tries after a season of loneliness to return to the house or body from which he had been expelled; and, finding that house in order, sweet and clean since his filthy self had been forced to vacate it, he calls other spirits more wicked than himself, and they take possession of the man, and make his state worse than it was at first.^e In this weird example is typified the condition of those who have received the truth, and thereby have been freed from the unclean influences of error and sin, so that in mind and spirit and body they are as a house swept and garnished and set in cleanly order, but who afterward renounce the good, open their souls to the demons of falsehood and deceit, and become more corrupt than before. "Even so," declared the Lord, "shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

Though the scribes and Pharisees were mostly unconvinced, if at all really impressed by His teachings, our Lord was not entirely without appreciative listeners. A woman in the company raised her voice in an invocation of blessing on the mother who had given birth to such a Son, and on the breasts that had suckled Him. While not rejecting this tribute of reverence, which applied to both mother and Son, Jesus answered: "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."^f

^c Jonah chaps. 1-4.

^d 1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chron. 9:1; compare Luke 11:31.

^e Matt. 12:43-45; Luke 11:24-26.

^f Luke 11:27, 28.

CHRIST'S MOTHER AND BRETHREN COME TO SEE HIM.^g

While Jesus was engaged with the scribes and Pharisees, and a great number of others, possibly at or near the conclusion of the teachings last considered, word was passed to Him that His mother and His brethren were present and desired to speak with Him. On account of the press of people they had been unable to reach His side. Making use of the circumstance to impress upon all the fact that His work took precedence over the claims of family and kinship, and thereby explaining that He could not meet His relatives at that moment, He asked, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" Answering His own question and expressing in the answer the deeper thought in His mind, He said, pointing toward His disciples: "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

The incident reminds one of the answer He made to His mother, when she and Joseph had found Him in the temple after their long and anxious search: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"^h In that business He was engaged when His mother and brethren desired to speak with Him as He sat amidst the crowd. The superior claims of His Father's work caused Him to let all minor matters wait. We are not justified in construing these remarks as evidence of disrespect, far less of filial and family disloyalty. Devotion, similar in kind at least, was expected by Him of the apostles, who were called to devote without reserve their time and talents to the ministry.ⁱ The purpose on which the relatives of Jesus had come to see Him is not made known; we may

^g Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21.

^h Luke 2:49. Page 114 herein.

ⁱ Matt. 10:37; compare Luke 14:26.

infer, therefore, that it was of no great importance beyond the family circle.^j

NOTES TO CHAPTER 18.

1. The Two Accounts of the Miracle.—In the commentary on the miraculous healing of the centurion's servant, as given in the text, we have followed in the main Luke's more circumstantial account. Matthew's briefer statement of the officer's petition, and the Lord's gracious compliance therewith, represents the man as coming in person to Jesus; while Luke refers to the elders of the local synagog as presenting the request. There is here no real discrepancy. It was then allowable, as in our time it is, to speak of one who causes something to be done as doing that thing himself. One may properly be said to notify another, when he sends the notification by a third party. A man may say he has built a house, when in reality others did the work of building though at his instance. An architect may with propriety be said to have constructed a building, when as a matter of fact he made the design, and directed others who actually reared the structure.

2. Jesus Marveled.—Both Matthew and Luke tell us that Jesus marveled at the faith shown by the centurion, who begged that his beloved servant be healed (Matt. 8:10; Luke 7:9). Some have queried how Christ, whom they consider to have been omniscient during His life in the flesh, could have marveled at anything. The meaning of the passage is evident in the sense that when the fact of the centurion's faith was brought to His attention, He pondered over it, and contemplated it, probably as a refreshing contrast to the absence of faith He so generally encountered. In similar way, though with sorrow in place of joy, He is said to have marveled at the peoples' unbelief (Mark 6:6).

3. Sequence of the Miracles of Raising the Dead.—As stated and reiterated in the text the chronology of the events in our Lord's ministry, as recorded by the Gospel-writers, is uncertain. Literature on the subject embodies much disputation and demonstrates absence of any near approach to agreement among Biblical scholars. We have record of three instances of miraculous restoration of the dead to life at the word of Jesus—the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and the raising of Lazarus; and on the sequence of two of these there is difference of opinion. Of course the placing of the raising of Lazarus as the latest of the three is based on certainty. Dr. Richard C. Trench, in his scholarly and very valuable *Notes on the Miracles of our Lord* definitely asserts that the raising of the daughter of Jairus is the first of the three works of restoration to life. Dr. John Laidlaw, in *The Miracles of our Lord*, treats this first among the miracles of its

^j Note 13, end of chapter.

class though without affirming its chronological precedence; many other writers make it the second of the three. The incentive to arrange the three miracles of this group in the sequence indicated may, perhaps, be found in the desire to present them in the increasing order of apparent greatness—the raising of the damsel being an instance of recalling to life one who had but just died, ("hardly dead" as some wrongly describe her condition), the raising of the young man of Nain being the restoration of one on the way to the tomb, and the raising of Lazarus an instance of recalling to life one who had lain four days in the sepulchre. We cannot consistently conceive of these cases as offering grades of greater or lesser difficulty to the power of Christ; in each case His word of authority was sufficient to reunite the spirit and body of the dead person. Luke, the sole recorder of the miracle at Nain, places the event before that of the raising of the daughter of Jairus, with many incidents between. The great preponderance of evidence is in favor of considering the three miracles in the order followed herein, (1) the raising of the young man of Nain, (2) that of the daughter of Jairus, and (3) that of Lazarus.

4. Tetrarch.—This title by derivation of the term and as originally used was applied to the ruler of a fourth part, or one of four divisions of a region that had formerly been one country. Later it came to be the designation of any ruler or governor over a part of a divided country, irrespective of the number or extent of the fractions. Herod Antipas is distinctively called the tetrarch in Matt. 14:1; Luke 3:1, 19; 9:7; and Acts 13:1; and is referred to as king in Matt. 14:9; Mark 6:14, 22, 25, 26.

5. Machærus.—According to the historian Josephus (Antiquities xviii; 5:2), the prison to which John the Baptist was consigned by Herod Antipas was the strong fortress Machærus.

6. Christ an Offender to Many.—The concluding part of our Lord's message to the imprisoned Baptist, in answer to the latter's inquiry, was, "Blessed is he whosoever is not offended in me." In passing it may be well to observe that whatever of reproof or rebuke these words may connote, the lesson was given in the gentlest way and in the form most easy to understand. As Deems has written, "Instead of saying 'Woe to him who is offended in me,' He puts it in the softer way 'Blessed is he who is not offended.'" In our English version of the Holy Bible the word "offend" and its cognates, are used in place of several different expressions which occur in the original Greek. Thus, actual infractions of the law, sin, and wickedness in general are all called offenses, and the perpetrators of such are guilty offenders who deserve punishment. In other instances even the works of righteousness are construed as causes of offense to the wicked; but this is so, not because the good works were in any way offenses against law or right, but because the law-breaker takes offense thereat. The convicted felon, if unrepentant and still of evil mind, is offended and angry at the law by which he has been brought to justice; to him the law is

a cause of offense. In a very significant sense Jesus Christ stands as the greatest offender in history; for all who reject His gospel, take offense therat. On the night of His betrayal Jesus told the apostles that they would be offended because of Him (Matt. 26:31; see also verse 33). The Lord's personal ministry gave offense not alone to Pharisees and priestly opponents, but to many who had professed belief in Him (John 6:61; compare 16:1). The gospel of Jesus Christ is designated by Peter as "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient" (1 Peter 2:8; compare Paul's words, Romans 9:33). Indeed blessed is he to whom the gospel is welcome, and who finds therein no cause for offense.

7. The Greatness of the Baptist's Mission.—The exalted nature of the mission of John the Baptist was thus testified to by Jesus: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11; compare Luke 7:28). In elucidation of the first part of this testimony, the prophet Joseph Smith said, in the course of a sermon delivered May 24, 1843, (*Hist. of the Church*, under date named): "It could not have been on account of the miracles John performed, for he did no miracles; but it was—First, because he was trusted with a divine mission of preparing the way before the face of the Lord. Who was trusted with such a mission before or since? No man. Second, he was trusted and it was required at his hands to baptize the Son of Man. Who ever did that? Who ever had so great a privilege or glory? Who ever led the Son of God into the waters of baptism, beholding the Holy Ghost descend upon Him in the sign of a dove? No man. Third, John at that time was the only legal administrator holding the keys of power there was on earth. The keys, the kingdom, the power, the glory had departed from the Jews; and John, the son of Zacharias, by the holy anointing and decree of heaven, held the keys of power at that time."

The latter part of our Lord's statement—"notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (John), has given rise to diverse interpretations and comment. The true meaning may be, that surpassingly great as was John's distinction among the prophets, he had not learned, at the time of the incident under consideration, the full purpose of the Messiah's mission, and such he would surely have to learn before he became eligible for admission into the kingdom of heaven; therefore, the least of those who through knowledge gained and obedience rendered, would be prepared for a place in the kingdom of which Jesus taught, was greater than was John the Baptist at that time. Through latter-day inspiration we learn that "it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance" (Doc. and Cov. 131:6), and that "The glory of God in intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth" (Doc. and Cov. 93:36). The Baptist's inquiry showed that he was then lacking in

knowledge, imperfectly enlightened and unable to comprehend the whole truth of the Savior's appointed death and subsequent resurrection as the Redeemer of the world. But we must not lose sight of the fact, that Jesus in no wise intimated that John would remain less than the least in the kingdom of heaven. As he increased in knowledge of the vital truths of the kingdom, and rendered obedience thereto, he would surely advance, and become great in the kingdom of heaven as he was great among the prophets of earth.

8. John the Baptist the Elias that was to Come.—In the days of Christ the people clung to the traditional belief that the ancient prophet Elijah was to return in person. Concerning this tradition the Dummetow *Commentary* says, on Matt. 11:14: "It was supposed that his [Elijah's] peculiar activity would consist in settling ceremonial and ritual questions, doubts and difficulties and that he would restore to Israel (1) the golden pot of manna, (2) the vessel containing the anointing oil, (3) the vessel containing the waters of purification, (4) Aaron's rod that budded and bore fruit." For this belief there was no scriptural affirmation. That John was to go before the Messiah in the spirit and power of Elias was declared by the angel Gabriel in his announcement to Zacharias (Luke 1:17); and our Lord made plain the fact that John was that predicted Elias. "Elias" is both a name and a title of office. Through revelation in the present dispensation we learn of the separate individuality of Elias and Elijah, each of whom appeared in person and committed to modern prophets the particular powers pertaining to his respective office (Doc. and Cov. 110:12, 13). We learn that the office of Elias is that of restoration (Doc. and Cov. 27:6, 7; 76:100; 77:9, 14). Under date of March 10, 1844, the following is recorded (*Hist. of Church*) as the testimony of the prophet Joseph Smith:—

"The spirit of Elias is to prepare the way for a greater revelation of God, which is the Priesthood of Elias, or the Priesthood that Aaron was ordained unto. And when God sends a man into the world to prepare for a greater work, holding the keys of the power of Elias, it was called the doctrine of Elias, even from the early ages of the world.

"John's mission was limited to preaching and baptizing; but what he did was legal; and when Jesus Christ came to any of John's disciples, He baptized them with fire and the Holy Ghost.

"We find the apostles endowed with greater power than John: their office was more under the spirit and power of Elijah than Elias.

"In the case of Philip when he went down to Samaria, when he was under the spirit of Elias, he baptized both men and women. When Peter and John heard of it, they went down and laid hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. This shows the distinction between the two powers.

"When Paul came to certain disciples, he asked if they had received the Holy Ghost? They said, No. Who baptized you, then? We were baptized unto John's baptism. No, you were

not baptized unto John's baptism, or you would have been baptized by John. And so Paul went and baptized them, for he knew what the true doctrine was, and he knew that John had not baptized them. And these principles are strange to me, that men who have read the Scriptures of the New Testament are so far from it.

"What I want to impress upon your minds is the difference of power in the different parts of the Priesthood, so that when any man comes among you, saying, 'I have the spirit of Elias,' you can know whether he be true or false; for any man that comes, having the spirit and power of Elias, he will not transcend his bounds.

"John did not transcend his bounds, but faithfully performed that part belonging to his office; and every portion of the great building should be prepared right and assigned to its proper place; and it is necessary to know who holds the keys of power, and who does not, or we may be likely to be deceived.

"That person who holds the keys of Elias hath a preparatory work.

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"This is the Elias spoken of in the last days, and here is the rock upon which many split, thinking the time was past in the days of John and Christ, and no more to be. But the spirit of Elias was revealed to me, and I know it is true; therefore I speak with boldness, for I know verily my doctrine is true."

9. At the Pharisee's Table.—The expression "sat at meat," as in Luke 7:37 and in other instances, is stated by good authority to be a mistranslation; it should be rendered "lay" or "reclined" (see Smith's *Comp. Dict. of the Bible*, article "Meals"). That sitting was the early Hebrew posture at meals is not questioned (Gen. 27:19; Judges 19:6; 1 Sam. 16:11; 20:5, 18, 24; 1 Kings 13:20); but the custom of reclining on couches set around the table seems to date back long before the days of Jesus (Amos 3:12; 6:4). The Roman usage of arranging the tables and adjoining couches along three sides of a square, leaving the fourth side open for the passage of the attendants who served the diners was common in Palestine. Tables and couches so placed constituted the *triclinium*. In reference to the ceremonial of the Pharisees in the matter of prescribed washing of articles used in eating, Mark (7:4) specifies "tables"; this mention is conceded to be a mistranslation, as couches or literally beds, are meant by the Greek expression. (See marginal reading, "beds" in Oxford Bible, and others.) A person reclining at table would have the feet directed outward. Thus it was a simple matter for the contrite woman to approach Jesus from behind and anoint His feet without causing disturbance to others at the table.

10. The Woman's Identity not Specified.—The attempt to identify the contrite sinner who anointed the feet of Jesus in the house of Simon the Pharisee with Mary of Bethany is thus strongly condemned by Farrar (p. 228, note): "Those who identify this feast at the house of Simon the Pharisee, in Galilee,

with the long-subsequent feast at the house of Simon the leper, at Bethany, and the anointing of the feet by 'a woman that was a sinner' in the city, with the anointing of the head by Mary the sister of Martha, adopt principles of criticism so reckless and arbitrary that their general acceptance would rob the Gospels of all credibility, and make them hardly worth study as truthful narratives. As for the names Simon and Judas, which have led to so many identifications of different persons and different incidents, they were at least as common among the Jews of that day as Smith and Jones among ourselves. There are five or six Judes and nine Simons mentioned in the New Testament, and two Judes and two Simons among the Apostles alone; Josephus speaks of some ten Judes and twenty Simons in his writings, and there must, therefore, have been thousands of others who at this period had one of these two names. The incident (of anointing with ointment) is one quite in accordance with the customs of the time and country, and there is not the least improbability in its repetition under different circumstances. (Eccles. 9:8; Cant. 4:10; Amos 6:6.) The custom still continues."

The learned canon is fully justified in his vigorous criticism; nevertheless he endorses the commonly-accepted identification of the woman mentioned in connection with the meal in the house of Simon the Pharisee with Mary Magdalene, although he admits that the foundation of the assumed identification is "an ancient tradition,—especially prevalent in the Western Church, and followed by the translation of our English version" (p. 233). As stated in our text, there is an entire absence of trustworthy evidence that Mary Magdalene was ever tainted with the sin for which the repentant woman in the Pharisee's house was so graciously pardoned by our Lord.

11. The Unpardonable Sin.—The nature of the awful sin against the Holy Ghost, against which the Lord warned the Pharisaic accusers who sought to ascribe His divine power to Satan, is more fully explained, and its dread results are more explicitly set forth in modern revelation. Concerning them and their dreadful fate, the Almighty has said:—"I say that it had been better for them never to have been born, for they are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels in eternity; concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come. . . .

They shall go away into everlasting punishment, which is endless punishment, which is eternal punishment, to reign with the devil and his angels in eternity, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, which is their torment; and the end thereof, neither the place thereof, nor their torment, no man knows, neither was it revealed, neither is, neither will be revealed unto man, except to them who are made partakers thereof: nevertheless I, the Lord, show it by vision unto many, but straightway shut it up again; wherefore the end, the width, the height, the depth, and the misery thereof, they understand not, neither any man except them who are ordained unto this

condemnation." (Doc. and Cov. 76:31-48; see also Heb. 6:4-6; B. of M., Alma 39:6.)

12. An Adulterous Generation Seeking after Signs.—Our Lord's reply to those who clamored for a sign, that "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (Matt. 12:39; see also 16:4; Mark 8:38) could only be interpreted by the Jews as a supreme reproof. That the descriptive designation "adulterous" was literally applicable to the widespread immorality of the time, they all knew. Adam Clarke in his commentary on Matt. 12:39, says of this phase of our topic: "There is the utmost proof from their [the Jews'] own writings, that in the time of our Lord, they were most literally an adulterous race of people; for at this very time Rabbi Jachanan ben Zacchi abrogated the trial by the bitter waters of jealousy, because so many were found to be thus criminal." For the information concerning the trial of the accused by the bitter waters, see Numb. 5:11-31. Although Jesus designated the generation in which He lived as adulterous, we find no record that the Jewish rulers, who by their demand for a sign had given occasion for the accusation, ventured to deny or attempt to repel the charge. The sin of adultery was included among capital offenses (Deut. 22:22-25). The severity of the accusation as applied by Jesus, however, was intensified by the fact that the older scriptures represented the covenant between Jehovah and Israel as a marriage bond (Isa. 54:5-7; Jer. 3:14; 31:32; Hos. 2:19, 20); even as the later scriptures typify the Church as a bride, and Christ as the husband (2 Cor. 11:2; compare Rev. 21:2). To be spiritually adulterous, as the rabbis construed the utterances of the prophets, was to be false to the covenant by which the Jewish nations claimed distinction, as the worshipers of Jehovah, and to be wholly recreant and reprobate. Convicted on such a charge those sign-seeking Pharisees and scribes understood that Jesus classed them as worse than the idolatrous heathen. The words "adultery" and "idolatry" are of related origin, each connoting the act of unfaithfulness and the turning away after false objects of affection or worship.

13. The Mother and the Brethren of Jesus.—The attempt of Mary and some members of her family to speak with Jesus on the occasion referred to in the text has been construed by many writers to mean that the mother and sons had come to protest against the energy and zeal with which Jesus was pursuing His work. Some indeed have gone so far as to say that the visiting members of the family had come to put Him under restraint, and to stem, if they could, the tide of popular interest, criticism, and offense, which surged about Him. The scriptural record furnishes no foundation for even a tentative conception of the kind. The purpose of the desired visit is not intimated. It is a fact as will be shown in pages to follow, that some members of Mary's household had failed to understand the great import of the work in which Jesus was so assiduously engaged; and we are told that some of His friends (marginal rendering, "kinsmen,") on one occasion set out with the purpose of laying hold

on Him and stopping His public activities by physical force, for they said "He is beside himself." (Mark 3:21); furthermore we learn that His brethren did not believe on Him (John 7:5). These facts, however, scarcely warrant the assumption that the desire of Mary and her sons to speak with Him on the occasion referred to was other than peaceful. And to assume that Mary, His mother, had so far forgotten the wondrous scenes of the angelic annunciation, the miraculous conception, the heavenly accompaniments of the birth, the more than human wisdom and power exhibited in youth and manhood, as to believe her divine Son an unbalanced enthusiast, whom she ought to restrain, is to assume responsibility for injustice to the character of one whom the angel Gabriel declared was blessed among women, and highly favored of the Lord.

The statement that the brethren of Jesus did not believe on Him at the time referred to by the recorder (John 7:5) is no proof that some or even all of those same brethren did not later believe on their divine Brother. Immediately after the Lord's ascension, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brethren were engaged in worship and supplication with the Eleven and other disciples (Acts 1:14). The attested fact of Christ's resurrection converted many who had before declined to accept Him as the Son of God. Paul records a special manifestation of the resurrected Christ to James (1 Cor. 15:7) and the James here referred to may be the same person elsewhere designated as "the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1:19); compare Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3. It appears that "brethren of the Lord" were engaged in the work of the ministry in the days of Paul's active service (1 Cor. 9:5). The specific family relationship of our Lord to James, Joses, Simon, Judas and the sisters referred to by Matthew (13:55, 56), and Mark (6:3), has been questioned; and several theories have been invented in support of divergent views. Thus, the Eastern or Epiphanian hypothesis holds, on no firmer basis than assumption, that the brethren of Jesus were children of Joseph of Nazareth by a former wife, and not the children of Mary the Lord's mother. The Levirate theory assumes that Joseph of Nazareth and Clopas (the latter name, it is interesting to note, is regarded as the equivalent of Alpheus, see footnote page 224) were brothers; and that, after the death of Clopas or Alpheus, Joseph married his brother's widow according to the levirate law (page 548). The Hieronymian hypothesis is based on the belief that the persons referred to as brethren and sisters of Jesus were children of Clopas (Alpheus) and Mary the sister of the Lord's mother, and therefore cousins to Jesus. (See Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; John 19:25.) It is beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus was regarded by those who were acquainted with the family of Joseph and Mary as a close blood relative of other sons and daughters belonging to the household. If these others were children of Joseph and Mary, they were all juniors to Jesus, for He was undoubtedly His mother's firstborn child. The acceptance of this relationship between Jesus and His "brethren" and "sisters" mentioned by the synoptists constitutes what is known in theological literature as the Helvidian view.

CHAPTER 19.

"HE SPAKE MANY THINGS UNTO THEM IN PARABLES."

Throughout the period of Christ's ministry with which we have thus far dealt, His fame had continuously increased, because of the authority with which He spoke and of the many mighty works He did. His popularity had become such that whenever He moved abroad great multitudes followed Him. At times the people so thronged as to impede His movements, some with a desire to hear more of the new doctrine, others to plead at His feet for relief from physical or other ills; and many there were who had faith that could they but reach Him, or even touch the border of His robe, they would be healed.^a One effect of the people's eagerness, which led them to press and crowd around Him, was to render difficult if not impossible at times the effective delivery of any discourse. His usual place for open-air teaching while He tarried in the vicinity of the sea, or lake, of Galilee was the shore; and thither flocked the crowds to hear Him. At His request the disciples had provided a "small ship," which was kept in readiness on the beach;^b and it was usual with Him to sit in the boat a short distance off shore, and preach to the people, as He had done when in the earlier days He called the chosen fishermen to leave their nets and follow Him.^c

On one such occasion He employed a means of instruction, which, prior to that time, had not been characteristic of His teaching; this consisted in the use of parables,^d or simple stories to illustrate His doctrines. Some of these we

^a Mark 3:10; compare Matt. 9:20, 21; 14:36; Mark 6:56; Luke 6:19.

^b Mark 3:9.

^c Luke 5:10; page 197 herein.

^d Note 1, end of chapter.

shall here consider briefly, in the order most advantageous for treatment, and, as best we know, in what may have been the sequence in which they were given.

“A SOWER WENT FORTH TO SOW.”

First in the order of delivery is the Parable of the Sower. It is a splendid type of our Lord's parables in general, and is particularly valuable for its great intrinsic worth and because we possess a comprehensive interpretation of it by the divine Author. This is the story:

“Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”^e

This new way of teaching, this departure from the Master's earlier method of doctrinal exposition, caused even the most devoted of the disciples to marvel. The Twelve and a few others came to Jesus when He was apart from the multitude, and asked why He had spoken to the people in this manner, and what was the meaning of this particular parable. Our Lord's reply to the first part of the inquiry we shall consider presently; concerning the second He asked “Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?”^f Thus did He indicate the simplicity of this the first of His parables, together with its typical and fundamental character, and at the same time intimate that other

^e Matt. 13:3-9; compare Mark 4:3-9; Luke 8:5-8.

^f Mark 4:13.

parables would follow in the course of His teaching. Then He gave the interpretation:

"Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."^g

Further exposition may appear superfluous; some suggestion as to the individual application of the contained lessons may be in place, however. Observe that the prominent feature of the story is that of the prepared or unprepared condition of the soil. The seed was the same, whether it fell on good ground or bad, on mellow mold or among stones and thistles. The primitive method of sowing, still followed in many countries, consisted in the sower throwing the grain by handfuls against the wind, thus securing a widespread scattering. Running through the Galilean fields were pathways, hard trodden by feet of men and beasts. Though seed should fall on such tracts, it could not grow; birds would pick up the living kernels lying unrooted and uncovered and some of the grains would be crushed and trodden down. So with the seed of truth falling upon the hardened heart; ordinarily it cannot take root, and Satan, as a marauding crow, steals it away, lest a grain of it perchance

^g Matt. 13:18-23; compare Mark 4:13-20; Luke 8:11-15

find a crack in the trampled ground, send down its rootlet, and possibly develop.

Seed falling in shallow soil, underlain by a floor of unbroken stone or hard-pan, may strike root and flourish for a brief season; but as the descending rootlets reach the impenetrable stratum they shrivel, and the plant withers and dies, for the nutritive juices are insufficient where there is no depth of earth.^h So with the man whose earnestness is but superficial, whose energy ceases when obstacles are encountered or opposition met; though he manifest enthusiasm for a time persecution deters him; he is offended,ⁱ and endures not. Grain sown where thorns and thistles abound is soon killed out by their smothering growth; even so with a human heart set on riches and the allurements of pleasure—though it receive the living seed of the gospel it will produce no harvest of good grain, but instead, a rank tangle of noxious weeds. The abundant yield of thorny thistles demonstrates the fitness of the soil for a better crop, were it only free from the cumbering weeds. The seed that falls in good deep soil, free from weeds and prepared for the sowing, strikes root and grows; the sun's heat scorches it not, but gives it thrift; it matures and yields to the harvester according to the richness of the soil, some fields producing thirty, others sixty, and a few even a hundred times as much grain as was sown.

Even according to literary canons, and as judged by the recognized standards of rhetorical construction and logical arrangement of its parts, this parable holds first place among productions of its class. Though commonly known to us as the Parable of the Sower, the story could be expressively designated as the Parable of the Four Kinds of Soil. It is the ground upon which the seed is cast, to which the story most strongly directs our attention, and which so aptly is made to symbolize the softened or the hardened heart,

^h Note 2, end of chapter.

ⁱ Pages 254 and 274.

is to be studied in the spirit of its purpose; and strained inferences or extensions are unwarranted. A strong metaphor, a striking simile, or any other expressive figure of speech, is of service only when rationally applied; if carried beyond the bounds of reasonable intent, the best of such may become meaningless or even absurd.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

Another parable, somewhat closely related to the foregoing as to the actual story, dealing again with seed and sowing, and, like the first, accompanied by an interpretation, was delivered by the Master as follows:

“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.”^j

When Jesus had retired to the house in which He lodged, the disciples came, saying: “Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.”

“He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers

^j Matt. 13:24-30.

are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”^k

By the Author’s explication, the sower was Himself, the Son of Man; and, as the condition of wheat and tares growing together was one that shall continue until “the end of the world,” those who were ordained to carry on the ministry after Him are by direct implication also sowers. The seed as here represented is not, as in the last parable, the gospel itself, but the children of men, the good seed typifying the honest in heart, righteous-minded children of the kingdom; while the tares are those souls who have given themselves up to evil and are counted as children of the wicked one. Inspired by zeal for their Master’s profit, the servants would have forcibly rooted up the tares, but were restrained, for their unwise though well-intended course would have endangered the wheat while yet tender, since in the early stages of growth it would have been difficult to distinguish the one from the other, and the intertwining of the roots would have caused much destruction of the precious grain.

One cardinal lesson of the parable, apart from the representation of actual conditions present and future, is that of patience, long-suffering, and toleration—each an attribute of Deity and a trait of character that all men should cultivate. The tares mentioned in the story may be considered as any kind of noxious weed, particularly such as in early growth resembles the wholesome grain.^l Over-sowing with the seed of weeds in a field already sown with grain is a

^k Verses 36-43.

^l Note 3, end of chapter.

species of malignant outrage not unknown even in the present day.^m The certainty of a time of separation, when the wheat shall be garnered in the store-house of the Lord, and the tares be burned, that their poisonous seed may reproduce no more, is placed beyond question by the Lord's own exposition.

So important is the lesson embodied in this parable, and so assured is the literal fulfilment of its contained predictions, that the Lord has given a further explication through revelation in the current dispensation, a period in which the application is direct and immediate. Speaking through Joseph Smith the Prophet in 1832, Jesus Christ said:

“But behold, in the last days, even now while the Lord is beginning to bring forth the word, and the blade is springing up and is yet tender. Behold, verily I say unto you, the angels are crying unto the Lord day and night, who are ready and waiting to be sent forth to reap down the fields; but the Lord saith unto them, pluck not up the tares while the blade is yet tender, (for verily your faith is weak,) lest you destroy the wheat also. Therefore let the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe, then ye shall first gather out the wheat from among the tares, and after the gathering of the wheat, behold and lo! the tares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned.”ⁿ

THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY.

Matthew records the Parable of the Tares as immediately following that of the Sower; Mark places in the same position of sequence a parable found in his writings alone. It is presented in outline form, and by critical expositors would be classed rather as a simple analogy than a typical parable. Read it:

“And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man

^m Note 4, end of chapter.

ⁿ Doc. and Cov. 86:4-7; read the entire section.

should cast seed into the ground ; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself ; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”^o

We have no record of the disciples asking nor of the Master giving any interpretation of this, or of any later parable.^p In this story we find effectively illustrated the fact of the vitality of the seed of truth, though the secret processes of its growth be a mystery to all save God alone. A man having planted seed must needs leave it alone. He may tend the field, removing weeds, protecting the plants as best he may, but the growth itself is dependent upon conditions and forces beyond his power to ultimately control. Though it were Paul who planted and Apollos who watered, none but God could insure the increase.^q The one who sowed may go about his other affairs, for the field does not demand continuous or exclusive attention ; nevertheless, under the influences of sunshine and shower, of breeze and dew, the blade develops, then the ear, and in due time the full corn in the ear. When the grain is ripe the man gladly harvests his crop.

The sower in this story is the authorized preacher of the word of God ; he implants the seed of the gospel in the hearts of men, knowing not what the issue shall be. Passing on to similar or other ministry elsewhere, attending to his appointed duties in other fields, he, with faith and hope, leaves with God the result of his planting. In the harvest of souls converted through his labor, he is enriched and made to rejoice.^r This parable was probably directed more particularly to the apostles and the most devoted of the other

^o Mark 4:26-29.

^p Note 5, end of chapter.

^q 1 Cor. 3:6.

^r Read the Lord's early promise of souls as the hire of the appointed harvesters: John 4:35-38; see also Matt. 9:37, 38; Luke 10:2.

disciples, rather than to the multitude at large ; the lesson is one for teachers, for workers in the Lord's fields, for the chosen sowers and reapers. It is of perennial value, as truly applicable today as when first spoken. Let the seed be sown, even though the sower be straightway called to other fields or other duties ; in the gladsome harvest he shall find his recompense.

THE MUSTARD SEED.

“Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field : which indeed is the least of all seeds : but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”^s

This little story, addressed to the assembled multitude, must have set many thinking, because of the simplicity of the incident related and the thoroughly un-Jewish application made of it. To the mind taught by teachers of the time the kingdom was to be great and glorious from its beginning ; it was to be ushered in by blare of trumpets and tramp of armies, with King Messiah at the head ; yet this new Teacher spoke of it as having so small a beginning as to be comparable to a mustard seed. To make the illustration more effective He specified that the seed spoken of was “the least of all seeds.” This superlative expression was made in a relative sense ; for there were and are smaller seeds than the mustard, even among garden plants, among which rue and poppy have been named ; but each of these plants is very small in maturity, while the well-cultivated mustard plant is one of the greatest among common herbs, and presents a strong contrast of growth from tiny seed to spreading shrub.

Moreover, the comparison “as small as a mustard seed”

^s Matt. 13:31, 32; compare Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18, 19.

was in every-day use among the Jews of the time. The comparison employed by Jesus on another occasion evidences the common usage, as when He said: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you."^t It should be known that the mustard plant attains in Palestine a larger growth than in more northerly climes.^u The lesson of the parable is easy to read. The seed is a living entity. When rightly planted it absorbs and assimilates the nutritive matters of soil and atmosphere, grows, and in time is capable of affording lodgment and food to the birds. So the seed of truth is vital, living, and capable of such development as to furnish spiritual food and shelter to all who come seeking. In both conceptions, the plant at maturity produces seed in abundance, and so from a single grain a whole field may be covered.

THE LEAVEN.

"Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."^v

Points of both similarity and contrast between this parable and the last are easily discerned. In each the inherent vitality and capacity for development, so essentially characteristic of the kingdom of God, are illustrated. The mustard seed, however, typifies the effect of vital growth in gathering the substance of value from without; while the leaven or yeast disseminates and diffuses outward its influence throughout the mass of otherwise dense and sodden dough. Each of these processes represents a means whereby the Spirit of Truth is made effective. Yeast is no less truly a living organism than a mustard seed. As the microscopic yeast plant develops and multiplies within the dough, its

^t Matt. 17:20; compare Luke 17:6.

^u Note 6, end of chapter.

^v Matt. 13:33; compare Luke 13:20, 21.

myriad living cells permeate the lump, and every bit of the leavened mass is capable of affecting likewise another batch of properly prepared meal. The process of leavening, or causing dough "to rise," by the fermentation of the yeast placed in the mass, is a slow one, and moreover as quiet and seemingly secret as that of the planted seed growing without the sower's further attention or concern.^w

THE HIDDEN TREASURE.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."^x

This and the two parables following are recorded by Matthew only; and the place assigned them in his narrative indicates that they were spoken to the disciples alone, in the house, after the multitude had departed. The quest for treasure-trove is always fascinating. Instances of finding buried valuables were not uncommon in the time of which we speak, since the practise of so concealing treasure was usual with people exposed to bandit incursions and hostile invasion. Observe that the fortunate and happy man is represented as finding the treasure seemingly by accident rather than as a result of diligent search. He gladly sold all that he possessed to make possible his purchase of the field. The hidden treasure is the kingdom of heaven; when a man finds that, he ought to be ready to sacrifice all that he has, if by so doing he may gain possession. His joy in the new acquisition will be unbounded; and, if he but remain a worthy holder, the riches thereof shall be his beyond the grave.^y

Casuists have raised the question of propriety as to the man's course of action in the story, inasmuch as he concealed

^w Page 288. Note 7, end of chapter.

^x Matt. 13:44.

^y Compare Matt. 6:19, 20.

the fact of his discovery from the owner of the field, to whom the treasure, they say, rightly belonged. Whatever opinion one may hold as to the ethics of the man's procedure, his act was not illegal, since there was an express provision in Jewish law that the purchaser of land became the legal owner of everything the ground contained.^z Assuredly Jesus commended no dishonest course; and had not the story been in every detail probable, its effect as a parable would have been lost. The Master taught by this illustration that when once the treasure of the kingdom is found, the finder should lose no time nor shrink from any sacrifice needful to insure his title thereto.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”^a

Pearls have always held high place among gems, and long before, as indeed ever since, the time of Christ, pearl-merchants have been active and diligent in seeking the largest and richest to be had. Unlike the man in the last parable, who found a hidden treasure with little or no search, the merchant in this story devoted his whole energy to the quest for goodly pearls, to find and secure which was his business. When at last he beheld the pearl that excelled all others, though it was, as of right it ought to have been, held at high cost, he gladly sold all his other gems; indeed he sacrificed “all that he had”—gems and other possessions—and purchased the pearl of great price. Seekers after truth may acquire much that is good and desirable, and not find the greatest truth of all, the truth that shall save them. Yet, if they seek persistently and with right intent, if they are really

^z Note 8, end of chapter.

^a Matt. 13:45, 46.

in quest of pearls and not of imitations, they shall find. Men who by search and research discover the truths of the kingdom of heaven may have to abandon many of their cherished traditions, and even their theories of imperfect philosophy and “science falsely so called,”^b if they would possess themselves of the pearl of great price. Observe that in this parable as in that of the hidden treasure, the price of possession is one’s all. No man can become a citizen of the kingdom by partial surrender of his earlier allegiances; he must renounce everything foreign to the kingdom or he can never be numbered therein. If he willingly sacrifices all that he has, he shall find that he has enough. The cost of the hidden treasure, and of the pearl, is not a fixed amount, alike for all; it is all one has. Even the poorest may come into enduring possession; his all is a sufficient purchase price.

THE GOSPEL NET.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”^c

Men of many minds, men good and bad, all nationalities and races, are affected by the gospel of the kingdom. The “fishers of men”^d are skilful, active, and comprehensive in their haul. The sorting takes place after the net is brought to shore; and, as the fisherman discards every bad fish while he saves the good, so shall the angels who do the bidding of the Son of Man separate the just and the wicked, preserving the one kind to life eternal, consigning the other to destruc-

^b 1 Tim. 6:20.

^c Matt. 13:47-50.

^d Matt. 4:19; Mark 1:17; Luke 5:10.

tion. Unwise efforts to carry the application of the parable beyond the Author's intent have suggested the criticism that whether the fish be good or bad they die. The good, however, die to usefulness, the bad to utter waste. Though all men die, they die not alike; some pass to rest, and shall come forth in the resurrection of the just; others go to a state of sorrow and disquiet there to anxiously and with dread await the resurrection of the wicked.^e Similarity of application in the present parable as in that of the tares, is apparent in the emphasis given to the decreed separation of the just from the unjust, and in the awful fate of those who are fit subjects for condemnation. A further parallelism is noticed in the postponement of the judgment until the "end of the world," by which expression we may understand the consummation of the Redeemer's work, subsequent to the Millennium and the final resurrection of all who have had existence on earth.^f

Following His delivery of this, the last of the group of parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, Jesus asked the disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" They answered, "Yea, Lord." He impressed upon them that they should be ready, like well-taught teachers, to bring, from the store-house of their souls, treasures of truth both old and new, for the edification of the world.^g

CHRIST'S PURPOSE IN USING PARABLES.

As before stated, the Twelve and other disciples were surprised at the Lord's innovation of parabolic instruction. Prior to that time His doctrines had been set forth in unveiled plainness, as witness the explicit teachings in the Sermon on the Mount. It is noticeable that the introduction of parables occurred when opposition to Jesus was strong, and when scribes, Pharisees, and rabbis were alert in main-

^e John 5:29; see also B. of M., Alma 40:11-14; and the author, "Articles of Faith," xxi:24-39.

^f See chapter 42.

^g Matt. 13:51, 52.

taining a close watch upon His movements and His works, ever ready to make Him an offender for a word. The use of parables was common among Jewish teachers; and in adopting this mode of instruction Jesus was really following a custom of the time; though between the parables He spake and those of the scholars there is possible no comparison except that of most pronounced contrast.^h

To the chosen and devoted followers who came asking the Master why He had changed from direct exposition to parables, He explainedⁱ that while it was their privilege to receive and understand the deeper truths of the gospel, "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" as He expressed it, with people in general, who were unreceptive and unprepared, such fulness of understanding was impossible. To the disciples who had already gladly accepted the first principles of the gospel of Christ, more should be given; while from those who had rejected the proffered boon, even what they had theretofore possessed should be taken away.^j "Therefore," said He, "speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." That the state of spiritual darkness then existing among the Jews had been foreseen was instanced by a citation of Isaiah's words, in which the ancient prophet had told of the people becoming blind, deaf, and hard of heart respecting the things of God, whereby though they would both hear and see in a physical sense yet should they not understand.^k

There is plainly shown an element of mercy in the parabolic mode of instruction adopted by our Lord under the conditions prevailing at the time. Had He always taught in explicit declaration, such as required no interpretation, many among His hearers would have come under condemnation, inasmuch as they were too weak in faith and unpre-

^h Note 9, end of chapter.

ⁱ Matt. 13:10-17; compare Mark 4:10-13; Luke 8:9, 10.

^j Matt. 13:12; compare 25:29; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18; 19:26.

^k Isa. 6:9; see also 42:20; 43:8; Ezek. 12:2; John 12:40; Acts 28:26, 27.

pared in heart to break the bonds of traditionalism and the prejudice engendered by sin, so as to accept and obey the saving word. Their inability to comprehend the requirements of the gospel would in righteous measure give Mercy some claim upon them, while had they rejected the truth with full understanding, stern Justice would surely demand their condemnation.¹

That the lesson of the parables was comprehensible through study, prayer and search was intimated in the Teacher's admonishment: "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."² To the more studious inquirers, the Master added: "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath."³ Two men may hear the same words; one of them listens in indolence and indifference, the other with active mind intent on learning all that the words can possibly convey; and, having heard, the diligent man goes straightway to do the things commended to him, while the careless one neglects and forgets. The one is wise, the other foolish; the one has heard to his eternal profit, the other to his everlasting condemnation.⁴

Another example of the merciful adaptation of the word of truth to the varied capacities of the people who heard the parables is found in the psychological fact, that the incidents of an impressive though simple story will live, even in minds which for the time being are incapable of comprehending any meaning beyond that of the common-place story itself. Many a peasant who had heard the little incident of the sower and the four kinds of soil, of the tares sown by an enemy at night, of the seed that grew though the planter had tem-

¹ See the author's "Articles of Faith," iii:12, 13; B. of M., 2 Nephi 9:25-27; Rom. 2:12; Doc. and Cov. 45:54; 76:72.

² Matt. 13:9, 43; see also 11:15; Mark 4:9.

³ Mark 4:24, 25.

⁴ Read again Matt. 7:24-27; Luke 8:46-49.

porarily forgotten it, would be reminded by the recurring circumstances of his daily work; the gardener would recollect the story of the mustard seed whenever he planted afresh, or when he looked upon the umbrageous plant with birds nesting in its branches; the housewife would be impressed anew by the story of the leaven as she mixed and kneaded and baked; the fisherman at his nets would think again of the good fish and the bad and compare the sorting of his catch with the judgment to come. And then, when time and experience, including suffering perhaps, had prepared them for deeper thought, they would find the living kernel of gospel truth within the husk of the simple tale.

PARABLES IN GENERAL.

The essential feature of a parable is that of comparison or similitude, by which some ordinary, well-understood incident is used to illustrate a fact or principle not directly expressed in the story. The popular thought that a parable necessarily rests on a fictitious incident is incorrect; for, inasmuch as the story or circumstance of the parable must be simple and indeed common-place, it may be real. There is no fiction in the parables we have thus far studied; the fundamental stories are true to life and the given circumstances are facts of experience. The narrative or incident upon which a parable is constructed may be an actual occurrence or fiction; but, if fictitious, the story must be consistent and probable, with no admixture of the unusual or miraculous. In this respect the parable differs from the fable, the latter being imaginative, exaggerated and improbable as to fact; moreover, the intent is unlike in the two, since the parable is designed to convey some great spiritual truth, while the so-called moral of the fable is at best suggestive only of worldly achievement and personal advantage. Stories of trees, animals and inanimate things talking to-

gether or with men are wholly fanciful; they are fables or apogees whether the outcome be depicted as good or bad; to the parable these show contrast, not similarity. The avowed purpose of the fable is rather to amuse than to teach. The parable may embody a narrative as in the instances of the sower and the tares, or merely an isolated incident, as in those of the mustard seed and the leaven.

Allegories are distinguished from parables by greater length and detail of the story, and by the intimate admixture of the narrative with the lesson it is designed to teach; these are kept distinctly separate in the parable. Myths are fictitious stories, sometimes with historic basis of fact, but without symbolism of spiritual worth. A proverb is a short, sententious saying, in the nature of a maxim, connoting a definite truth or suggestion by comparison. Proverbs and parables are closely related, and in the Bible the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.^p The Old Testament contains two parables, a few fables and allegories, and numerous proverbs; of the last-named we possess an entire book.^q Nathan the prophet reproved King David by the parable of the poor man's ewe lamb, and so effective was the story that the king decreed punishment for the wealthy offender, and was overcome by sorrow and contrition when the prophet made application of his parable by the fateful words, "Thou art the man."^r The story of the vineyard, which though fenced and well-tended yet brought forth only wild, useless fruit, was used by Isaiah to portray the sinful state of Israel in his attempt to awaken the people to lives of righteousness.^s

The parables of the New Testament, spoken by the Teacher of teachers, are of such beauty, simplicity, and effectiveness, as to stand unparalleled in literature.

^p Note 10, end of chapter.

^q Note 11, end of chapter.

^r 2 Sam. 12:1-7, 13.

^s Isa. 5:1-7.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 19.

1. The First Group of Parables.—Many Bible scholars hold that the seven parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew were spoken at different times and to different people, and that the writer of the first Gospel grouped them for convenience in recording and with prime consideration of their subjective interest. Some color is found for this claim in Luke's mention of some of these parables in different relations of both time and place; thus, the parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven are given (Luke 13:18, 21) as directly following the healing of the infirm woman in the synagog, and the rebuke to the hypocritical ruler. While we must admit that Matthew may have grouped with the parables spoken on that particular day some of other dates, it is probable that Jesus repeated some of His parables, as He certainly did other teachings, and thus presented the same lesson on more occasions than one. As a matter of fact each parable is a lesson in itself, and holds its high intrinsic value whether considered as an isolated story or in connection with related teachings. Let us give heed to the lesson of each whatever opinions men may promulgate as to the circumstances of its first delivery.

2. Local Setting for the Parable of the Sower.—Dr. R. C. Trench, in his excellent work *Notes on the Parables of our Lord* (p. 57, note), quotes Dean Stanley's description of existing conditions in the place where the Parable of the Sower was given by Jesus; and as there is reason to believe that the environment has changed but little since the days of Christ, the account is here reproduced: "A slight recess in the hillside close upon the plain disclosed at once in detail, and with a conjunction which I remember nowhere else in Palestine, every feature of the great parable. There was the undulating corn-field descending to the water's edge. There was the trodden pathway running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent the seed falling here or there on either side of it, or upon it—itself hard with the constant tramp of horse and mule and human feet. There was the 'good' rich soil, which distinguishes the whole of that plain and its neighborhood from the bare hills elsewhere, descending into the lake, and which, where there is no interruption, produces one vast mass of corn. There was the rocky ground of the hillside protruding here and there through the corn-fields, as elsewhere, through the grassy slopes. There were the large bushes of thorn, the 'nabk' . . . springing up, like the fruit-trees of the more inland parts, in the very midst of the waving wheat."

3. Tares.—This term occurs nowhere within the Bible except in this instance of the parable. Plainly any kind of weed, particularly a poisonous sort, such as would seriously depreciate the garnered crop, would serve the Master's purpose in the illustration. The traditional belief commonly held is that the plant referred to in the parable is the darnel weed, known to botanists

as *Lolium temulentum*, a species of bearded rye-grass. This plant closely resembles wheat in the early period of growth, and exists as a pest to the farmers in Palestine to-day; it is called by the Arabians "Zowan" or "Zawan" which name, says Arnot, citing Thompson, "bears some resemblance to the original word in the Greek text." The writer of the article "Tares" in Smith's Dictionary says: "Critics and expositors are agreed that the Greek plural *zizania*, A. V. 'tares,' of the parable (Matt. 13:25) denotes the weed called 'bearded darnel' (*Lolium temulentum*), a widely-distributed grass, and the only species of the order that has deleterious properties. The bearded darnel before it comes into ear is very similar in appearance to wheat, and the roots of the two are often intertwined; hence the command that the 'tares' should be left till the harvest, lest while men plucked up the tares 'they should root up also the wheat with them.' This darnel is easily distinguishable from the wheat and barley when headed out, but when both are less developed, 'the closest scrutiny will often fail to detect it. Even the farmers, who in this country generally weed their fields, do not attempt to separate the one from the other. . . . The taste is bitter, and, when eaten separately, or even when diffused in ordinary bread, it causes dizziness, and often acts as a violent emetic.'" The secondary quotation is from Thompson's *The Land and the Book*, ii, 111, 112. It has been asserted that the darnel is a degenerated kind of wheat; and attempts have been made to give additional significance to our Lord's instructive parable by injecting this thought; there is no scientific warrant for the strained conception, however, and earnest students will not be misled thereby.

4. The Wickedness of the Sower of Tares.—Attempts have been made to disparage the Parable of the Tares on the ground that it rests on an unusual if not unknown practise. Trench thus meets the criticism (*Notes on the Parables*, pp. 72, 73): "Our Lord did not imagine here a form of malice without example, but adduced one which may have been familiar enough to His hearers, one so easy of execution, involving so little risk, and yet effecting so great and lasting a mischief, that it is not strange, where cowardice and malice meet, that this should have been often the shape in which they displayed themselves. We meet traces of it in many quarters. In Roman law the possibility of this form of injury is contemplated; and a modern writer, illustrating Scripture from the manners and habits of the East, with which he had become familiar through a sojourn there, affirms the same to be now practised in India." In a subjoined note the author adds: "We are not without this form of malice nearer home. Thus in Ireland I have known an outgoing tenant, in spite of his eviction, to sow wild oats in the fields which he was leaving. These, like the tares in the parable, ripening and seeding themselves before the crops in which they were mingled, it became next to impossible to extirpate."

5. The Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly.—This parable has given rise to much discussion among expositors, the question being as to who is meant by the man who cast seed into the

ground. If, as in the parables of the Sower and the Tares, the Lord Jesus be the planter, then, some ask, how can it be said "that the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how," when all things are known unto Him? If on the other hand the planter represents the authorized teacher or preacher of the gospel, how can it be said that at the harvest time "he putteth in the sickle," since the final harvesting of souls is the prerogative of God? The perplexities of the critics arise from their attempt to find in the parable a literalism never intended by the Author. Whether the seed be planted by the Lord Himself, as when He taught in Person, or by any one of His authorized servants, the seed is alive and will grow. Time is required; the blade appears first and is followed by the ear, and the ear ripens in season, without the constant attention which a shaping of the several parts by hand would require. The man who figures in the parable is presented as an ordinary farmer, who plants, and waits, and in due time reaps. The lesson imparted is the vitality of the seed as a living thing, endowed by its Creator with the capacity to both grow and develop.

6. The Mustard Plant.—The wild mustard, which in the temperate zone seldom attains a height of more than three or four feet, reaches in semitropical lands the height of a horse and its rider (Thompson, *The Land and the Book* ii, 100). Those who heard the parable evidently understood the contrast between size of seed and that of the fully developed plant. Arnot, (*The Parables*, p. 102), aptly says: "This plant obviously was chosen by the Lord, not on account of its absolute magnitude, but because it was, and was recognized to be, a striking instance of increase from very small to very great. It seems to have been in Palestine, at that time, the smallest seed from which so large a plant was known to grow. There were, perhaps, smaller seeds, but the plants which sprung from them were not so great; and there were greater plants, but the seeds from which they sprung were not so small." Edersheim (i, p. 593) states that the diminutive size of the mustard seed was commonly used in comparison by the rabbis, "to indicate the smallest amount such as the least drop of blood, the least defilement, etc." The same author continues, in speaking of the grown plant: "Indeed, it looks no longer like a large garden-herb or shrub, but 'becomes' or rather appears like 'a tree'—as St. Luke puts it, 'a great tree,' of course, not in comparison with other trees, but with garden-shrubs. Such growth of mustard seed was also a fact well known at the time, and, indeed, still observed in the East. . . . And the general meaning would the more easily be apprehended, that a tree, whose wide-spreading branches afforded lodgment to the birds of heaven, was a familiar Old Testament figure for a mighty kingdom that gave shelter to the nations (Ezek. 31:6, 12; Dan. 4:12, 14, 21, 22). Indeed, it is specifically used as an illustration of the Messianic Kingdom (Ezek. 17:23)."

7. The Symbolism of Leaven.—In the parable, the kingdom of heaven is likened unto leaven. In other scriptures leaven is

figuratively mentioned as representing evil, thus, "the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6, see also Luke 12:1), "the leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15). These instances, and others (1 Cor. 5:7, 8) are illustrative of the contagion of evil. In the incident of the woman using leaven in the ordinary process of bread-making, the spreading, penetrating, vital effect of truth is symbolized by the leaven. The same thing in different aspects may very properly be used to represent good in one instance and evil in another.

8. Treasure Belonging to the Finder.—As to the justification of the man who found a treasure hidden in another's field and then, concealing the fact of his discovery, bought the field that he might possess the treasure, Edersheim (i, p. 595-6) says: "Some difficulty has been expressed in regard to the morality of such a transaction. In reply it may be observed, that it was, at least, in entire accordance with Jewish law. If a man had found a treasure in loose coins among the corn it would certainly be his if he bought the corn. If he had found it on the ground, or in the soil, it would equally certainly belong to him if he could claim ownership of the soil, and even if the field were not his own, unless others could prove their right to it. The law went so far as to adjudge to the purchaser of fruits anything found among these fruits. This will suffice to vindicate a question of detail, which, in any case, should not be too closely pressed in a parabolic history."

9. Superiority of our Lord's Parables.—"Perhaps no other mode of teaching was so common among the Jews as that by parables. Only in their case, they were almost entirely illustrations of what had been said or taught; while in the case of Christ, they served as the foundation for His teaching. . . . In the one case it was intended to make spiritual teaching appear Jewish and national, in the other to convey spiritual teaching in a form adapted to the stand-point of the hearers. This distinction will be found to hold true, even in instances where there seems the closest parallelism between a Rabbinic and an Evangelic parable. . . . It need scarcely be said that comparison between such parables, as regards their spirit, is scarcely possible, except by way of contrast" (Edersheim, i, pp. 580-1). Geikie tersely says: "Others have uttered parables, but Jesus so far transcends them, that He may justly be called the creator of this mode of instruction" (ii, p. 145).

10. Parables and Other Forms of Analogy.—"The parable is also clearly distinguishable from the proverb, though it is true that, in a certain degree, the words are used interchangeably in the New Testament, and as equivalent the one to the other. Thus 'Physician, heal thyself' (Luke 4:23) is termed a parable, being more strictly a proverb; so again, when the Lord had used that proverb, probably already familiar to His hearers 'If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch'; Peter said 'Declare unto us this parable' (Matt. 15:14, 15); and Luke 5:36 is a proverb or proverbial expression, rather than a parable, which name it bears. So, upon the other hand,

those are called 'proverbs' in St. John, which if not strictly parables, yet claim much closer affinity to the parable than to the proverb, being in fact allegories; thus Christ's setting forth of His relations to His people under those of a shepherd to his sheep is termed a 'proverb,' though our translators, holding fast to the sense rather than to the letter, have rendered it a 'parable' (John 10:6; compare 16:25, 29). It is easy to account for this interchange of words. Partly it arose from one word in Hebrew signifying both parable and proverb."—Trench, *Notes on the Parables*, pp. 9, 10.

For the convenience of readers who may not have a dictionary at hand as they read, the following definitions are given:

Allegory.—The setting forth of a subject under the guise of some other subject or aptly suggestive likeness.

Apologue.—A fable or moral tale, especially one in which animals or inanimate things speak or act, and by which a useful lesson is suggested or taught.

Fable.—A brief story or tale feigned or invented to embody a moral, and introducing animals and sometimes even inanimate things as rational speakers and actors; a legend or myth.

Myth.—A fictitious or conjectural narrative presented as historical, but without any basis of fact.

Parable.—A brief narrative or descriptive allegory founded on real scenes or events such as occur in nature and human life, and usually with a moral or religious application.

Proverb.—A brief, pithy saying, condensing in witty or striking form the wisdom of experience; a familiar and widely known popular saying in epigrammatic form.

11. Old Testament Parables, Etc.—"Of parables in the strictest sense the Old Testament contains only two" (2 Sam. 12:1-; and Isa. 5:1-). "Other stories, such as that of the trees assembled to elect a king (Judges 9:8), and of the thistle and cedar (2 Kings 14:9), are more strictly fables. Still others, such as Ezekiel's account of the two eagles and the vine (17:2-), and of the caldron (24:3-) are allegories. The small number of parabolic narratives to be found in the Old Testament must not, however, be taken as an indication of indifference toward this literary form as suitable for moral instruction. The number is only apparently small. In reality, similitudes, which, though not explicitly couched in the terms of fictitious narrative, suggest and furnish the materials for such narrative, are abundant."—Zenos, *Stand. Bible Dict.*, article "Parables."

By applying the term "parable" in its broadest sense, to include all ordinary forms of analogy, we may list the following as the most impressive parables of the Old Testament. Trees electing a king (Judges 9:7-); the poor man's ewe lamb (2 Sam. 12:1-); the contending brothers and the avengers (2 Sam. 14:1-); story of the escaped captive (1 Kings 20:35-); the thistle and the cedar (2 Kings 14:9); the vineyard and its wild grapes (Isa. 5:1-); the eagles and the vine (Ezek. 17:3-); the lion's whelps (Ezek. 19:2-); the seething pot (Ezek. 24:3-).

CHAPTER 20.

"PEACE, BE STILL."

INCIDENTS PRELIMINARY TO THE VOYAGE.

Near the close of the day on which Jesus had taught the multitudes for the first time by parables, He said to the disciples, "Let us pass over unto the other side."^a The destination so indicated is the east side of the sea of Galilee. While the boat was being made ready, a certain scribe came to Jesus and said: "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Prior to that time, few men belonging to the titled or ruling class had offered to openly ally themselves with Jesus. Had the Master been mindful of policy and desirous of securing official recognition, this opportunity to attach to Himself as influential a person as a scribe would have received careful consideration if not immediate acceptance; but He, who could read the minds and know the hearts of men, chose rather than accepted. He had called men who were to be thenceforth His own, from their fishing boats and nets, and had numbered one of the ostracized publicans among the Twelve; but He knew them, every one, and chose accordingly. The gospel was offered freely to all; but authority to officiate as a minister thereof was not to be had for the asking; for that sacred labor, one must be called of God.^b

In this instance, Christ knew the character of the man, and, without wounding his feelings by curt rejection, pointed out the sacrifice required of one who would follow whithersoever the Lord went, saying: "The foxes have holes, and the

^a Mark 4:35.

^b "Articles of Faith," x:1-20—"Men called of God."

birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." As Jesus had no fixed place of abode, but went wherever His duty called Him, so was it necessary that they who represented Him, men ordained or set apart to His service, be ready to deny themselves the enjoyment of their homes and the comfort of family associations, if the duties of their calling so demanded. We do not read that the aspiring scribe pressed his offer.

Another man indicated his willingness to follow the Lord, but asked first for time to go and bury his father; to him Jesus said: "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." Some readers have felt that this injunction was harsh, though such an inference is scarcely justified. While it would be manifestly unfilial for a son to absent himself from his father's funeral under ordinary conditions, nevertheless, if that son had been set apart to service of importance transcending all personal or family obligations, his ministerial duty would of right take precedence. Moreover, the requirement expressed by Jesus was no greater than that made of every priest during his term of active service, nor was it more afflicting than the obligation of the Nazarite vow,^c under which many voluntarily placed themselves. The duties of ministry in the kingdom pertained to spiritual life; one dedicated thereto might well allow those who were negligent of spiritual things, and figuratively speaking, spiritually dead, to bury their dead.

A third instance is presented; a man who wanted to be a disciple of the Lord asked that, before entering upon his duties, he be permitted to go home and bid farewell to his family and friends. The reply of Jesus has become an aphorism in life and literature: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."^d

^c Page 87.

^d Luke 9:57-62; see also Matt. 8:19-22.

From Matthew's record we draw the inference that the first two of these candidates for discipleship offered themselves to our Lord as He stood on the shore or in the boat ready to begin the evening voyage across the lake. Luke places the instances in a different connection, and adds to the offers of the scribe and the man who would first bury his father, that of the one who wished to go home and then return to Christ. The three incidents may be profitably considered together, whether all occurred in the evening of that same eventful day or at different times.

STILLING THE STORM.^e

The instruction to launch forth and cross to the opposite side of the lake was given by Jesus, who probably desired a respite after the arduous labors of the day. No time had been lost in unnecessary preparation; "they took him, even as he was, into the ship," and set out without delay. Even on the water some of the eager people tried to follow; for a number of small boats, "little ships" as Mark styles them, accompanied the vessel on which Jesus was embarked; but these lesser craft may have turned back, possibly on account of the approaching storm; anyway, we do not hear of them further.

Jesus found a resting place near the stern of the ship and soon fell asleep. A great storm arose;^f and still He slept. The circumstance is instructive as it evidences at once the reality of the physical attributes of Christ, and the healthy, normal condition of His body. He was subject to fatigue and bodily exhaustion from other causes, as are all men; without food He grew hungry; without drink He thirsted; by labor He became weary. The fact that after a day of strenuous effort He could calmly sleep, even amidst the turmoil of a tempest, indicates an unimpaired nervous

^e Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25.

^f Note 1, end of chapter.

system and a good state of health. Nowhere do we find record of Jesus having been ill. He lived according to the laws of health, yet never allowed the body to rule the spirit; and His daily activities, which were of a kind to make heavy demands on both physical and mental energy, were met with no symptoms of nervous collapse nor of functional disturbance. Sleep after toil is natural and necessary. The day's work done, Jesus slept.

Meanwhile the storm increased in fury; the wind rendered the boat unmanageable; waves beat over the side; so much water was shipped that the vessel seemed about to founder. The disciples were terror-stricken; yet through it all Jesus rested peacefully. In their extremity of fear, the disciples awakened Him, crying out, according to the several independent accounts, "Master, Master, we perish"; "Lord, save us: we perish"; and, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" They were abjectly frightened, and at least partly forgetful that there was with them One whose voice even death had to obey. Their terrified appeal was not wholly devoid of hope nor barren of faith: "Lord, save us" they cried. Calmly He replied to their piteous call, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?"

Then He arose; and out through the darkness of that fearsome night, into the roaring wind, over the storm-lashed sea, went the voice of the Lord as He "rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Turning to the disciples, He asked in tones of gentle yet unmistakable reproof: "Where is your faith?" and "How is it that ye have no faith?" Gratitude for rescue from what but a moment before had seemed impending death was superseded by amazement and fear. "What manner of man is this," they asked one of another, "that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Among the recorded miracles of Christ, none has elicited greater diversity in comment and in attempt at elucidation

than has this marvelous instance of control over the forces of nature. Science ventures no explanation. The Lord of earth, air, and sea spoke and was obeyed. He it was who, amidst the black chaos of creation's earliest stages, had commanded with immediate effect—Let there be light; Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters; Let the dry land appear—and, as He had decreed, so it was. The dominion of the Creator over the created is real and absolute. A small part of that dominion has been committed to man^g as the offspring of God, tabernacled in the very image of his divine Father. But man exercises that delegated control through secondary agencies, and by means of complicated mechanism. Man's power over the objects of his own devizing is limited. It is according to the curse evoked by Adam's fall, which came through transgression, that by the strain of his muscles, by the sweat of his brow, and by stress of his mind, shall he achieve. His word of command is but a sound-wave in air, except as it is followed by labor. Through the Spirit that emanates from the very Person of Deity, and which pervades all space, the command of God is immediately operative.

Not man alone, but also the earth and all the elemental forces pertaining thereto came under the Adamic curse;^h and as the soil no longer brought forth only good and useful fruits, but gave of its substance to nurture thorns and thistles, so the several forces of nature ceased to be obedient to man as agents subject to his direct control. What we call natural forces—heat, light, electricity, chemical affinity—are but a few of the manifestations of eternal energy through which the Creator's purposes are subserved; and these few, man is able to direct and utilize only through mechanical contrivance and physical adjustment. But the earth shall yet be “renewed and receive its paradisaical glory”; then

^g Gen. 1:28; P. of G. P., Moses 2:28; 5:1.

^h Gen. 3:17-19.

soil, water, air, and the forces acting upon them, shall directly respond to the command of glorified man, as now they obey the word of the Creator.ⁱ

QUIETING THE DEMONS.^j

Jesus and the disciples with Him landed on the eastern or Perean side of the lake, in a region known as the country of the Gadarenes or Gergesenes. The precise spot has not been identified, but it was evidently a country district apart from the towns.^k As the party left the boat, two maniacs, who were sorely tormented by evil spirits, approached. Matthew states there were two; the other writers speak of but one; it is possible that one of the afflicted pair was in a condition so much worse than that of his companion that to him is accorded greater prominence in the narrative; or, one may have run away while the other remained. The demoniac was in a pitiful plight. His frenzy had become so violent and the physical strength incident to his mania so great that all attempts to hold him in captivity had failed. He had been bound in chains and fetters, but these he had broken asunder by the aid of demon power; and he had fled to the mountains, to the caverns that served as tombs, and there he had lived more like a wild beast than a man. Night and day his weird, terrifying shrieks had been heard, and through dread of meeting him people traveled by other ways rather than pass near his haunts. He wandered about naked, and in his madness often gashed his flesh with sharp stones.

Seeing Jesus, the poor creature ran toward Him, and, impelled by the power of his demon control, prostrated himself before Christ, the while crying out with a loud voice: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?" As Jesus commanded the evil spirits to leave, one or more of them, through the voice of the man,

ⁱ Note 2, end of chapter.

^j Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-19; Luke 8:26-39.

^k Note 3, end of chapter.

pleaded to be left alone, and with blasphemous presumption exclaimed: "I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." Matthew records the further question addressed to Jesus: "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" The demons, by whom the man was possessed and controled, recognized the Master, whom they knew they had to obey; but they pleaded to be left alone until the decreed time of their final punishment would come.^l

Jesus asked, "What is thy name?" and the demons within the man answered, "My name is Legion, for we are many." The fact of the man's dual consciousness or multi-personality is here apparent. So complete was his possession by wicked spirits that he could no longer distinguish between his individual personality and theirs. The devils implored that Jesus would not banish them from that country; or as Luke records in words of awful import, "that he would not command them to go out into the deep."^m In their wretched plight, and out of diabolical eagerness to find abode in bodies of flesh even though of beasts, they begged that, being compelled to leave the man they be allowed to enter a herd of hogs feeding nearby. Jesus gave permission; the unclean demons entered the swine; and the whole herd, numbering about two thousand, went wild, stampeded in terror, ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were drowned. The swineherds were frightened, and, hastening to the town, told what had happened to the hogs. People came out in crowds to see for themselves; and all were astounded to behold the once wild man of whom they had all been afraid, now clothed, and restored to a normal state of mind, sitting quietly and reverently at the feet of Jesus. They were afraid of One who could work such wonders, and, conscious of their sinful unworthiness, begged Him to leave their country.ⁿ

^l Compare Rev. 20:3.

^m Revised version, "abyss" instead of "deep."

ⁿ Note 4, end of chapter.

The man who had been rid of the demons feared not ; in his heart love and gratitude superseded all other feelings ; and as Jesus returned to the boat he prayed that he might go also. But Jesus forbade, saying : "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." The man became a missionary, not alone in his home town but throughout Decapolis, the region of the ten cities ; wherever he went he told of the marvelous change Jesus had wrought on him.

The testimony of wicked and unclean spirits to the divinity of Christ as the Son of God is not confined to this instance. We have already considered the case of the demoniac in the synagog at Capernaum ;^o and another instance appeared, when Jesus, withdrawing from the towns in Galilee, betook Himself to the sea shore, and was followed by a great multitude comprising Galileans and Judeans, and people from Jerusalem and Idumea, and from beyond Jordan (i. e. from Perea), and inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, amongst whom He had healed many of divers diseases ; and those who were in bondage to unclean spirits had fallen down and worshiped Him ; while the demons cried out : "Thou art the Son of God."^p

In the course of the short journey considered in this chapter, the power of Jesus as Master of earth, men and devils, was manifest in miraculous works of the most impressive kind. We cannot classify the Lord's miracles as small and great, nor as easy and difficult of accomplishment ; what one may consider the least is to another of profound import. The Lord's word was sufficient in every instance. To the wind and the waves, and to the demon-ridden mind of the man possessed, He had but to speak and be obeyed. "Peace, be still."

^o Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34, also verse 41; see page 181 herein.

^p Mark 3:7-11; compare Luke 6:17-19. See page 187.

THE RAISING OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.^q

Jesus and His attendants recrossed the lake from the land of Gadara to the vicinity of Capernaum, where He was received with acclamation by a multitude of people, "for they were all waiting for him." Immediately after landing, Jesus was approached by Jairus, one of the rulers of the local synagog, who "besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live."

The fact of this man's coming to Jesus, with the spirit of faith and supplication, is an evidence of the deep impression the ministry of Christ had made even in priestly and ecclesiastical circles. Many of the Jews, rulers and officials as well as the people in common, believed in Jesus;^r though few belonging to the upper classes were willing to sacrifice prestige and popularity by acknowledging their discipleship. That Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagog, came only when impelled by grief over the impending death of his only daughter, a girl of twelve years, is no evidence that he had not before become a believer; certainly at this time his faith was genuine and his trust sincere, as the circumstances of the narrative prove. He approached Jesus with the reverence due One whom he considered able to grant what he asked, and fell at the Lord's feet, or as Matthew says, worshiped Him. When the man had started from his home to seek aid of Jesus, the maiden was at the point of death; he feared lest she had died in the interval. In the very brief account given in the first Gospel, he is reported as saying to Jesus: "My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her and she shall live."^s Jesus went with the imploring father, and many followed.

^q Mark 5:22-24, 35-43; Luke 8:41, 42, 49-56; Matt. 9:18, 19, 23-26.

^r John 11:45; compare 8:30; 10:42.

^s Note 5, end of chapter.

On the way to the house an incident occurred to hinder progress. A sorely afflicted woman was healed, under circumstances of peculiar interest; this occurrence we shall consider presently. No intimation is given that Jairus showed impatience or displeasure over the delay; he had placed trust in the Master and awaited His time and pleasure; and while Christ was engaged in the matter of the suffering woman, messengers came from the ruler's house with the saddening word that the girl was dead. We may infer that even these dread tidings of certainty failed to destroy the man's faith; he seems to have still looked to the Lord for help, and those who had brought the message asked, "Why troublest thou the Master any further?" Jesus heard what was said, and sustained the man's sorely-taxed faith by the encouraging behest: "Be not afraid, only believe." Jesus permitted none of His followers save three of the apostles to enter the house with Himself and the bereaved but trusting father. Peter and the two brothers James and John were admitted.

The house was no place of such respectful silence or subdued quiet as we now consider appropriate to the time and place of death; on the contrary it was a scene of tumult, but that condition was customary in the orthodox observances of mourning at the time.^t Professional mourners, including singers of weird dirges, and minstrels who made great noise with flutes and other instruments, had already been summoned to the house. To all such Jesus said, on entering: "Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead but sleepeth." It was in effect a repetition of His command uttered on a then recent occasion—Peace, be still. His words drew scorn and ridicule from those who were paid for the noise they made, and who, if what He said proved true, would lose this opportunity of professional service. Moreover, they knew the maid was dead; preparations for the funeral, which custom required should follow death as speed-

^t Note 6, end of chapter.

ily as possible, were already in progress. Jesus ordered these people out, and restored peace to the house.^u He then entered the death chamber, accompanied only by the three apostles and the parents of the girl. Taking the dead maiden by the hand He "said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." To the astonishment of all but the Lord, the girl arose, left her bed, and walked. Jesus directed that food be given her, as bodily needs, suspended by death, had returned with the girl's renewal of life.

The Lord imposed an obligation of secrecy, charging all present to refrain from telling what they had seen. The reasons for this injunction are not stated. In some other instances a similar instruction was given to those who had been blessed by Christ's ministrations; while on many occasions of healing no such instructions are recorded, and in one case at least the man who had been relieved of demons was told to go and tell how great a thing had been done for him.^v In His own wisdom Christ knew when to prudently forbid and when to permit publication of His doings. Though the grateful parents, the girl herself, and the three apostles who had been witnesses of the restoration, may all have been loyal to the Lord's injunction of silence, the fact that the maiden had been raised to life could not be kept secret, and the means by which so great a wonder had been wrought would certainly be inquired into. The minstrels and the wailers who had been expelled from the place while it was yet a house of mourning, and who had scornfully laughed at the Master's assertion that the maiden was asleep and not dead as they thought, would undoubtedly spread reports. It is not surprising, therefore, to read in Matthew's short version of the history, that the fame of the miracle "went abroad into all that land."

^u Note 7, end of chapter.

^v Mark 5:19-20; Luke 8:39. Page 312.

RESTORATION TO LIFE AND RESURRECTION.

The vital distinction between a restoration of the dead to a resumption of mortal life, and the resurrection of the body from death to a state of immortality, must be thoughtfully heeded. In each of the instances thus far considered—that of the raising of the dead man of Nain,^w and that of the daughter of Jairus, as also in the raising of Lazarus to be studied later—the miracle consisted in reuniting the spirit and the body in a continuation of the interrupted course of mortal existence. That the subject of each of these miracles had to subsequently die is certain. Jesus Christ was the first of all men who have lived on earth to come forth from the tomb an immortalized Being; He is therefore properly designated as “the first fruits of them that slept.”^x

Though both Elijah and Elisha, many centuries prior to the time of Christ, were instrumental in restoring life to the dead, the former to the widow’s son in Zareptha, the latter to the child of the Shunammite woman,^y in these earlier miracles the restoration was to mortal existence, not to immortality. It is instructive to observe the difference in the procedure of each of the Old Testament prophets mentioned as compared with that of Christ in analogous miracles. By both Elijah and Elisha the wonderful change was brought about only after long and labored ministrations, and earnest invocation of the power and intervention of Jehovah; but Jehovah, embodied in flesh as Jesus Christ, did nothing outwardly but command, and the bonds of death were immediately broken. He spoke in His own name and by inherent authority, for by the power with which He was invested He held control of both life and death.

^w Page 251.

^x 1 Cor. 15:20, 23; see also Acts 26:23; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5; and “Articles of Faith,” xxi:24-27.

^y 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:31-37.

A REMARKABLE HEALING BY THE WAY.²

While Jesus was walking to the house of Jairus with a great crowd of people thronging about Him, the progress of the company was arrested by another case of suffering. In the throng was a woman who for twelve years had been afflicted with a serious ailment involving frequent hemorrhage. She had spent in medical treatment all she had owned, and "had suffered many things of many physicians," but had steadily grown worse. She worked her way through the crowd, and, approaching Jesus from behind, touched His robe; "For she said, If I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole." The effect was more than magical; immediately she felt the thrill of health throughout her body, and knew that she had been healed of her affliction. Her object attained, the blessing she sought being now secured, she tried to escape notice by hastily dropping back into the crowd. But her touch was not unheeded by the Lord. He turned to look over the throng and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" or as Luke puts it, "Who touched me?" As the people denied, the impetuous Peter speaking for himself and the others said: "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" But Jesus answered: "Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."

The woman, finding that she could not escape identification, came tremblingly forward, and, kneeling before the Lord, confessed what she had done, her reason for so doing, and the beneficent result. If she had expected censure her fears were promptly set at rest, for Jesus, addressing her by a term of respect and kindness, said: "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace," and as Mark adds, "be whole of thy plague."

This woman's faith was sincere and free from guile,

² Mark 5:25-34; Matt. 9:20-22; Luke 8:43-48.

nevertheless it was in a sense defective. She believed that the influence of Christ's person, and even that attaching to His raiment, was a remedial agency, ample to cure her malady; but she did not realize that the power to heal was an inherent attribute to be exercised at His will, and as the influence of faith might call it forth. True, her faith had already been in part rewarded, but of greater worth to her than the physical cure of her illness would be the assurance that the divine Healer had granted the desire of her heart, and that the faith she had manifested was accepted by Him. To correct her misapprehension and to confirm her faith, Jesus gently subjected her to the necessary ordeal of confession, which must have been made easier through her consciousness of the great relief already experienced. He confirmed the healing and let her depart with the comforting assurance that her recovery was permanent.

In contrast with the many cases of healing in connection with which the Lord charged the beneficiaries that they should tell none how or by whom they had been relieved, we see here that publicity was made sure by His own action, and that too, when secrecy was desired by the recipient of the blessing. The purposes and motives of Jesus may be but poorly understood by man; but in this woman's case we see the possibility of stories strange and untrue getting afloat, and it appears to have been the wiser course to make plain the truth then and there. Moreover the spiritual worth of the miracle was greatly enhanced by the woman's confession and by the Lord's gracious assurance.

Observe the significant assertion, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Faith is of itself a principle of power;^a and by its presence or absence, by its fulness or paucity, even the Lord was and is influenced, and in great measure controled, in the bestowal or withholding of blessings; for He ministers according to law, and not with caprice or uncertainty.

^a "Articles of Faith," v:11-13.

We read that at a certain time and place Jesus "could there do no mighty work" because of the people's unbelief.^b Modern revelation specifies that faith to be healed is one of the gifts of the Spirit, analogous to the manifestations of faith in the work of healing others through the exercise of the power of the Holy Priesthood.^c

Our Lord's inquiry as to who had touched Him in the throng affords us another example of His asking questions in pursuance of a purpose, when He could readily have determined the facts directly and without aid from others. There was a special purpose in the question, as every teacher finds a means of instruction in questioning his pupils.^d But there is in Christ's question, "Who touched me?" a deeper significance than could inhere in a simple inquiry as to the identity of an individual; and this is implied in the Lord's further words: "Somebody *hath* touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." The usual external act by which His miracles were wrought was a word or a command, sometimes accompanied by the laying on of hands, or by some other physical ministration as in anointing the eyes of a blind man.^e That there was an actual giving of His own strength to the afflicted whom He healed is evident from the present instance. Passive belief on the part of a would-be recipient of blessing is insufficient; only when it is vitalized into active faith is it a power; so also of one who ministers in the authority given of God, mental and spiritual energy must be operative if the service is to be effective.

THE BLIND SEE AND THE DUMB SPEAK.^f

Two other instances of miraculous healing are chronicled by Matthew as closely following the raising of the daughter of Jairus. As Jesus passed down the streets of Capernaum,

^b Mark 6:5, 6; compare Matt. 13:58.

^c Doc. and Cov. 46:19; compare Matt. 8:10; 9:28, 29. Acts 14:9.

^d Note 8, end of chapter.

^e Matt. 8:3; Luke 4:40; 13:13; John 9:6; compare Mark 6:5; 7:33; 8:23.

^f Matt. 9:27-35.

presumably on His departure from the house of the ruler of the synagog, two blind men followed Him, crying out: "Thou son of David, have mercy on us." This title of address was voiced by others at sundry times, and in no case do we find record of our Lord disclaiming it or objecting to its use.^g Jesus paused not to heed this call of the blind, and the two sightless men followed Him, even entering the house after Him. Then He spoke to them, asking: "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" And they replied, "Yea, Lord." Their persistency in following the Lord was evidence of their belief that in some way, though to them unknown and mysterious, He could help them; and they promptly and openly confessed that belief. Our Lord touched their eyes, saying: "According to your faith be it unto you." The effect was immediate; their eyes were opened. They were explicitly instructed to say nothing of the matter to others; but, rejoicing in the inestimable blessing of sight, they "spread abroad his fame in all that country." So far as we can unravel the uncertain threads of sequence in the works of Christ, this is the earliest instance, recorded with attendant details, of His giving sight to the blind. Many remarkable cases follow.^h

It is worthy of note that in blessing the sightless by the exercise of His healing power, Jesus usually ministered by some physical contact in addition to uttering the authoritative words of command or assurance. In this instance, as also in that of two blind men who sat by the wayside, He touched the sightless eyes; in the giving of sight to the blind indigent in Jerusalem He anointed the man's eyes with clay; to the eyes of another He applied saliva.ⁱ An analogous circumstance is found in the healing of one who was deaf and defective of speech, in which instance the Lord put His fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue.^j In no

^g Matt. 15:22; 20:30, 31; Mark 10:47, 48; Luke 18:38, 39.

^h Note 9, end of chapter.

ⁱ Matt. 20:30-34; John 9:6; Mark 8:23.

^j Mark 7:32-37.

case can such treatment be regarded as medicinal or therapeutic. Christ was not a physician who relied upon curative substances, nor a surgeon to perform physical operations; His healings were the natural results of the application of a power of His own. It is conceivable that confidence, which is a stepping-stone to belief, as that in turn is to faith, may have been encouraged by these physical ministrations, strengthened, and advanced to a higher and more abiding trust in Christ, on the part of the afflicted who had not sight to look upon the Master's face and derive inspiration therefrom, nor hearing to hear His uplifting words. There is apparent not alone an entire absence of formula and formalism in His ministration, but a lack of uniformity of procedure quite as impressive.

As the two men, once sightless but now seeing, departed, others came, bringing a dumb friend whose affliction seems to have been primarily due to the malignant influence of an evil spirit rather than to any organic defect. Jesus rebuked the wicked spirit—cast out the demon that had obsessed the afflicted one and held him in the tyranny of speechlessness. The man's tongue was loosened, he was freed from the evil incubus, and was no longer dumb.^k

NOTES TO CHAPTER 20.

1. Storms on the Lake of Galilee.—It is a matter of record that sudden and violent storms are common on the lake or sea of Galilee; and the tempest that was quieted by the Lord's word of command was of itself no unusual phenomenon, except perhaps in its intensity. Another incident connected with a storm on this small body of water is of scriptural record, and will be considered later in the text (Matt. 14:22-26; Mark 6:45-56; John 6:15-21). Dr. Thompson (*The Land and the Book* ii:32) gives a description founded on his personal experience on the shores of the lake: "I spent a night in that Wady Shukaiyif, some three miles up it, to the left of us. The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning the face of the lake was a

^k Matt. 9:32, 33. Note 10, end of chapter.

huge boiling caldron. The wind howled down every wady from the north-east and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast.

. To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low—six hundred feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Hauran, and upward to snowy Hermon; and the water-courses have cut out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of this lake, and that these act like gigantic funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains."

2. The Earth Before and After Its Regeneration.—That the earth itself fell under the curse incident to the fall of the first parents of the race, and that even as man shall be redeemed so shall the earth be regenerated, is implied in Paul's words: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:21-23). The present author has written elsewhere: "According to the scriptures, the earth has to undergo a change analogous to death, and to be regenerated in a manner comparable to a resurrection. References to the elements melting with heat, and to the earth being consumed and passing away, such as occur in many scriptures already cited, are suggestive of death; and the new earth, really the renewed or regenerated planet, which is to result, may be compared with a resurrected organism. The change has been likened unto a transfiguration (Doc. and Cov. 63:20, 21). Every created thing has been made for a purpose; and everything that fills the measure of its creation is to be advanced in the scale of progression, be it an atom or a world, an animalcule, or man—the direct and literal offspring of Deity. In speaking of the degrees of glory provided for His creations, and of the laws of regeneration and sanctification, the Lord, in a revelation dated 1832, speaks plainly of the approaching death and subsequent quickening of the earth. These are His words:—'And again, verily I say unto you, the earth abideth the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law. Wherefore it shall be sanctified; yea, notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and the righteous shall inherit it.' (Doc. and Cov. 88:25-26.)"

The vital Spirit that emanates from God and is coextensive with space, may operate directly and with as positive effect upon inanimate things, and upon energy in its diverse manifestations known to us as the forces of nature, as upon organized intelligences, whether yet unembodied, in the flesh, or disembodied. Thus, the Lord may speak directly to the earth, the air, the sea, and be heard and obeyed, for the divine affluence, which is the

sum of all energy and power may and does operate throughout the universe. In the course of a revelation from God to Enoch, the earth is personified, and her groans and lamentations over the wickedness of men were heard by the prophet: "And it came to pass that Enoch looked upon the earth; and he heard a voice from the bowels thereof, saying: Wo, wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me? When will my Creator sanctify me, that I may rest, and righteousness for a season abide upon my face?" Enoch pleaded: "O Lord, wilt thou not have compassion upon the earth?" Following further revelation as to the then future course of mankind in sin and in the rejection of the Messiah who was to be sent, the prophet wept with anguish, and asked of God "When shall the earth rest?" It was then shown unto him that the crucified Christ shall return to earth and establish a millennial reign of peace: "And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah; and the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men." And the glorious assurance followed "that for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest." (P. of G. P., Moses 7:48, 49, 58, 60, 61, 64.)

A partial description of the earth in its regenerated state has been given through the prophet Joseph Smith in the present dispensation: "This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ's." (Doc. and Cov. 130:9).

That Jesus Christ, in the exercise of His powers of Godship, should speak directly to the wind or the sea and be obeyed, is no less truly in accord with the natural law of heaven, than that He should effectively command a man or an unembodied spirit. That through faith even mortal man may set in operation the forces that act upon matter and with assurance of stupendous results has been explicitly declared by Jesus Christ: "For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20; compare Mark 11:23; Luke 17:6).

3. The Land of the Gergesenes.—Attempts have been made to discredit the account of Christ's healing the demoniac in "the country of the Gadarenes" (Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26) on the claim that the ancient town of Gadara the capital of the district (see Josephus, Wars, iii, 7:1), was too far inland to make possible the precipitous dash of the swine into the sea from that place. Others

lay stress on the fact that Matthew differs from the two other Gospel-historians, in specifying "the country of the Gergesenes" (8:28). As stated in the text, a whole region or section is referred to, not a town. The keepers of the swine ran off to the towns to report the disaster that had befallen their herd. In that district of Perea there were at the time towns named respectively Gadara, Gerasa, and Gergesa; the region in general, therefore, could properly be called the land of the Gadarenes or of the Gergesenes. Farrar (*Life of Christ*, p. 254 note) says: "After the researches of Dr. Thompson (*The Land and the Book*, ii:25), there can be no doubt that Gergesa . . . was the name of a little town nearly opposite Capernaum, the ruined site of which is still called Kerza or Gersa by the Bedawin. The existence of this little town was apparently known both to Origen, who first introduced the reading, and to Eusebius and Jerome; and in their day a steep declivity near it, where the hills approach to within a little distance from the lake, was pointed out as the scene of the miracle."

4. Jesus Entreated to Leave the Country.—The people were frightened over the power possessed by Jesus, as demonstrated in the cure of the demoniac, and in the destruction of the swine, which latter occurrence, however, was not in pursuance of His command. It was the fear that sinful men feel in the presence of the Righteous. They were not prepared for other manifestations of divine power, and they dreaded to think who among them might be directly affected thereby should it be exerted. We must judge the people mercifully, however, if at all. They were in part heathen, and had but superstitious conceptions of Deity. Their prayer that Jesus leave them brings to mind the ejaculation of Simon Peter in his witnessing one of Christ's miracles: "Depart from me: for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8).

5. "Dead," or "At the Point of Death."—According to Luke (8:42) the daughter of Jairus "lay a dying" when the grief-stricken father sought help of the Lord; Mark (5:23) reports the man as stating that the girl lay "at the point of death." These two accounts agree; but Matthew (9:18) represents the father as saying: "My daughter is even now dead." Unbelieving critics have dwelt at length on what they designate an inconsistency if not a contradiction in these versions; and yet both accounts embodied in the three records are plainly true. The maid was seemingly breathing her last, she was in the very throes of death, when the father hurried away. Before he met Jesus he felt that the end had probably come; nevertheless his faith endured. His words attest his trust, that even had his daughter actually died since he left her side, the Master could recall her to life. He was in a state of frenzied grief, and still his faith held true.

6. Mourning Customs Among Orientals.—Observances that to us seem strange, weird, and out of place, prevailed from very early times among oriental peoples, some of which customs were common to the Jews in the days of Christ. Noise and tumult, including screeching lamentations by members of the bereaved family and by professional mourners, as also the din of instru-

ments, were usual accompaniments of mourning. Geikie, citing Buxtorf's quotation from the Talmud, gives place to the following: "Even a poor Israelite was required to have not fewer than two flute players and one mourning woman at the death of his wife; but if he be rich all things are to be done according to his quality." In Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, we read: "The number of words (about eleven Hebrew and as many Greek) employed in scripture to express the various actions characteristic of mourning, shows in a great degree the nature of Jewish customs in this respect. They appear to have consisted chiefly in the following particulars: (1) Beating upon the breast or other parts of the body. (2) Weeping and screaming in an excessive degree. (3) Wearing sad-colored garments. (4) Songs of lamentation. (5) Funeral feasts. (6) Employment of persons, especially women, to lament. One marked feature of oriental mourning is what may be called its studied publicity, and the careful observance of prescribed ceremonies (Gen. 23:2; Job 1:20; 2:8; Isa. 15:3; etc.)."

7. "Not Dead, but Sleepeth."—That the daughter of Jairus was dead is placed beyond reasonable doubt by the scriptural record. Our Lord's statement to the noisy mourners that "the damsel is not dead but sleepeth" told that her sleep was to be of short duration. It was a rabbinical and common custom of the time to speak of death as a sleep, and those who laughed Jesus to scorn for His statement chose to construe His words in a sense of such literalism as the context scarcely warrants. It is noticeable that the Lord used a strictly equivalent expression with respect to the death of Lazarus. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," said He, "but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." The literal construction placed upon these words by the apostles evoked the plain declaration "Lazarus is dead" (John 11:11, 14). In the Talmud death is repeatedly designated as sleep—hundreds of times says Lightfoot, a recognized authority on Hebrew literature.

8. Why Did Jesus Make Inquiries?—We have already considered many instances of Christ's possession of what man would call superhuman knowledge, extending even to the reading of unuttered thoughts. Some people find difficulty in reconciling this superior quality with the fact that Jesus often asked questions even on matters of minor circumstance. We should realize that even complete knowledge may not preclude the propriety of making inquiries, and, moreover, that even omniscience does not imply ever-present consciousness of all that is. Undoubtedly through his paternal heritage of divine attributes, Jesus had the power of ascertaining for Himself, by means not possessed by others, any facts He might have desired to know; nevertheless we find Him repeatedly asking questions on circumstantial detail (Mark 9:21; 8:27; Matt. 16:13; Luke 8:45); and this He did even after His resurrection (Luke 24:41; John 21:5; B. of M., 3 Nephi 17:7).

That catechization is one of the most effective means of mind development is exemplified in the methods followed by the

best of human teachers. Trench (*Notes on the Miracles*, pp. 148-9), thus instructively points the lesson as illustrated by our Lord's question concerning the woman who was healed of her issue of blood: With little force "can it be urged that it would have been inconsistent with absolute truth for the Lord to profess ignorance, and to ask the question which He did ask, if all the while He perfectly knew what He thus seemed implicitly to say that He did not know. A father among his children, and demanding Who committed this fault? himself conscious, even while he asks, but at the same time willing to bring the culprit to a full confession, and so to put him in a pardonable state, can he be said, in any way to violate the law of the highest truth? The same offense might be found in Elisha's 'Whence comest thou, Gehazi?' (2 Kings 5:25) when his heart went with his servant all the way that he had gone; and even in the question of God Himself to Adam, 'Where art thou?' (Gen. 3:9), and to Cain, 'Where is Abel thy brother?' (Gen. 4:9). In every case there is a moral purpose in the question, an opportunity given even at the latest moment for making good at least a part of the error by its unreserved confession."

9. The Blind See.—In his treatment of the miraculous healing of the two blind men who had followed Jesus into the house, Trench (*Notes on the Miracles of our Lord*, p. 152) says: "We have here the first of those many healings of the blind recorded (Matt. 12:22; 20:30; 21:14; John 9) or alluded to (Matt. 11:5) in the Gospels; each of them a literal fulfilment of that prophetic word of Isaiah concerning the days of Messiah: 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened' (35:5). Frequent as these miracles are, they yet will none of them be found without distinguishing features of their own. That they should be so numerous is nothing wonderful, whether we regard the fact from a natural or spiritual point of view. Regarded naturally they need not surprize us if we keep in mind how far commoner a calamity is blindness in the East than with us. Regarded from a spiritual point of view we have only to remember how commonly sin is contemplated in Scripture as a moral blindness (Deut. 28:29; Isa. 59:10; Job 12:25; Zeph. 1:17), and deliverance from sin as a removal of this blindness (Isa. 6:9, 10; 43:8; Eph. 1:18; Matt. 15:14); and we shall at once perceive how fit it was that He who was the 'light of the world' should often accomplish works which symbolized so well that higher work which He came into the world to accomplish."

10. Imputation of Satanic Agency.—Observe that in the matter of healing the dumb demoniac referred to in the text, Christ was charged with being in league with the devil. Although the people, impressed by the manifestation of divine power in the healing, exclaimed in reverence, "It was never so seen in Israel," the Pharisees, intent on counteracting the good effect of the Lord's miraculous ministration, said "He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils." (Matt. 9:32-34.) For further treatment of this inconsistent and, strictly speaking, blasphemous charge, see pages 265-269.

CHAPTER 21.

THE APOSTOLIC MISSION, AND EVENTS RELATED
THERETO.JESUS AGAIN IN NAZARETH.^a

It will be remembered that, in the early days of His public ministry, Jesus had been rejected by the people of Nazareth, who thrust Him out from their synagog and tried to kill Him.^b It appears that subsequent to the events noted in our last chapter, He returned to the town of His youth, and again raised His voice in the synagog, thus mercifully affording the people another opportunity to learn and accept the truth. The Nazarenes, as they had done before, now again openly expressed their astonishment at the words He spoke, and at the many miraculous works He had wrought; nevertheless they rejected Him anew, for He came not as they expected the Messiah to come; and they refused to know Him save as "the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon;" all of whom were common folk as were also His sisters. "And they were offended at him."^c Jesus reminded them of the proverb then current among the people, "A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." Their unbelief was so dense as to cause Him to marvel;^d and because of their lack of faith He was unable to accomplish any great work except to heal a few exceptional believers upon whom He laid His hands. Leaving Nazareth, He entered upon His third tour of the Galilean towns and villages, preaching and teaching as He went.^d

^a Matt. 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6.

^b Luke 4:28-30. See pages 179-181.

^c Pages 254, 274.

^d Note 2, page 273.

^d Note 1, end of chapter.

THE TWELVE CHARGED AND SENT.^e

About this time, also, Jesus inaugurated a notable expansion of the ministry of the kingdom, by sending forth the Twelve on assigned missions. Since their ordination the apostles had been with their Lord, learning from Him by public discourse and private exposition, and acquiring invaluable experience and training through that privileged and blessed companionship. The purpose of their ordination was specified—"that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach."^f They had been pupils under the Master's watchful guidance for many months; and now they were called to enter upon the duties of their calling as preachers of the gospel and individual witnesses of the Christ. By way of final preparation they were specifically and solemnly charged.^g Some of the instructions given them on this occasion had particular reference to their first mission, from which they would in due time return and report; other directions and admonitions were to be of effect throughout their ministry, even after the Lord's ascension.

They were directed to confine their ministrations for the time being "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and not to open a propaganda among the Gentiles,^h nor even in Samaritan cities. This was a temporary restriction, imposed in wisdom and prudence; later, as we shall see, they were directed to preach among all nations, with the world for their field.ⁱ The subject of their discourses was to be that upon which they had heard the Master preach—"the kingdom of heaven is at hand." They were to exercise the authority of the Holy Priesthood as conferred upon them by ordination; it was a specified part of their mission to "heal

^e Matt. 10:5-42; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6.

^f Mark 3:14.

^g Matt. 10:5-42; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6.

^h Note 2, end of chapter.

ⁱ Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15. Page 695 herein.

the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils," as occasion presented itself; and they were commanded to give freely, even as they had freely received. Personal comfort and bodily needs they were not to provide for; the people were to be proved as to their willingness to receive and assist those who came in the name of the Lord; and the apostles themselves were to learn to rely upon a Provider more to be trusted than man; therefore money, extra clothing, and things of mere convenience were to be left behind. In the several towns they entered they were to seek entertainment and leave their blessing upon every worthy family into which they were received. If they found themselves rejected by a household or by a town as a whole, they were to shake the dust from their feet on leaving, as a testimony against the people;^j and it was decreed that, in the day of judgment, the place so denounced would fare worse than wicked Sodom and Gomorrha upon which fire from heaven had descended.

The apostles were told to be prudent, to give no needless offense, but to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves; for they were sent forth as sheep into the midst of wolves. They were not to recklessly entrust themselves to the power of men; for wicked men would persecute them, seek to arraign them before councils and courts, and to afflict them in the synagoggs. Moreover they might expect to be brought before governors and kings, under which extreme conditions they were to rely upon divine inspiration as to what they should say, and not depend upon their own wisdom in preparation and premeditation; "For," said the Master, "it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."^k

They were not to trust even the claims of kinship for protection, for families would be divided over the truth,

^j Note 3, end of chapter.

^k Matt. 10:18-20; compare Mark 13:9; Luke 12:10-12.

brother against brother, children against parents, and the resulting strife would be deadly. These servants of Christ were told that they would be hated of all men, but were assured that their sufferings were to be for His name's sake. They were to withdraw from the cities that persecuted them, and go to others; and the Lord would follow them, even before they would be able to complete the circuit of the cities of Israel. They were admonished to humility, and were always to remember that they were servants, who ought not to expect to escape when even their Master was assailed. Nevertheless they were to be fearless, hesitating not to preach the gospel in plainness; for the most their persecutors could do was to kill the body, which fate was as nothing compared to that of suffering destruction of the soul in hell.

Assurance of the Father's watchful care was impressed upon them by the simple reminder that though sparrows were sold two for a farthing, and yet not a sparrow could be sacrificed without the Father's concern, they, who were of more value than many sparrows, would not be forgotten. They were solemnly warned that whosoever would freely confess the Christ before men would be acknowledged by Him in the Father's presence, while they who denied Him before men would be denied in heaven. And again they were told that the gospel would bring strife, whereby households would be disrupted; for the doctrine the Lord had taught would be as a sword to cut and divide. The duties of their special ministry were to supersede the love for kindred; they must be willing to leave father, mother, son, or daughter, whatever the sacrifice; for, said Jesus "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

The significance of this figure must have been solemnly impressive, and actually terrifying; for the cross was a symbol of ignominy, extreme suffering, and death. However, should they lose their lives for His sake, they would

find life eternal; while he who was not willing to die in the Lord's service should lose his life in a sense at once literal and awful. They were never to forget in whose name they were sent; and were comforted with the assurance that whoever received them would be rewarded as one who had received the Christ and His Father; and that though the gift were only that of a cup of cold water, the giver should in no wise lose his reward.

Thus charged and instructed, the twelve special witnesses of the Christ set out upon their mission, traveling in pairs,^l while Jesus continued His personal ministry.

THE TWELVE RETURN.

We are without definite information as to the duration of the apostles' first mission, and as to the extent of the field they traversed. The period of their absence was marked by many important developments in the individual labors of Jesus. It is probable that during this time our Lord visited Jerusalem, on the occasion mentioned by John as coincident with the unnamed feast of the Jews.^m While the apostles were absent, Jesus was visited by the Baptist's disciples, as we have already seen,ⁿ and the return of the Twelve occurred near the time of the infamous execution of John the Baptist in prison.^o

The missionary labors of the apostles greatly augmented the spread of the new doctrine of the kingdom, and the name and works of Jesus were proclaimed throughout the land. The people of Galilee were at that time in a state of discontent threatening open insurrection against the government; their unrest had been aggravated by the murder of the Baptist. Herod Antipas, who had given the fatal order, trembled in his palace. He heard, with fear due to inward

^l Mark 6:7.

^m John 5; pages 206, 216.

ⁿ Matt. 11:2-19; Luke 7:18-34; see page 252.

^o Page 259.

conviction of guilt, of the marvelous works wrought by Jesus, and in terror averred that Christ could be none other than John Baptist returned from the tomb. His fawning courtiers essayed to allay his fears by saying that Jesus was Elijah, or some other of the prophets whose advent had been predicted; but the conscience-stricken Herod said: "It is John whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead." Herod desired to see Jesus; perhaps through the fascination of fear, or with the faint hope that sight of the renowned Prophet of Nazareth might dispel his superstitious dread that the murdered John had returned to life.

Upon the completion of their missionary tour, the apostles rejoined the Master and reported to Him both what they had taught and what they had done by way of authoritative ministration. They had preached the gospel of repentance in all the cities, towns, and villages to which they had gone; they had anointed with oil many afflicted ones, and the power of their priesthood had been attested by consequent healings; even unclean spirits and devils had been subject unto them.^p They found Jesus attended by great multitudes; and they had little opportunity of private conference with Him; "for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." The apostles must have heard in gladness the Lord's invitation: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." In quest of seclusion, Jesus and the Twelve withdrew from the throng, and privately entered a boat in which they crossed to a rural spot adjacent to the city of Bethsaida.^q Their departure had not been unobserved, however, and eager crowds hastened along the shore, and partly around the northerly end of the lake, to join the party at the landing place. From John's account we are led to infer that, before

^p Mark 6:12, 13; Luke 9:10. Note similar testimony of the Seventy, who were sent out at a later time, and who returned rejoicing in the power that had been manifest in their ministry; Luke 10:17.

^q Note 4, end of chapter.

the arrival of great numbers, Jesus and His companions had ascended the hillside near the shore, where, for a short time they had rested. As the multitude gathered on the lower slopes, our Lord looked upon them as upon sheep without a shepherd; and, yielding to their desire and to His own emotions of divine pity, He taught them many things, healed their afflicted ones, and comforted their hearts with compassionate tenderness.

FIVE THOUSAND FED IN THE DESERT.^r

So intent were the people on hearing the Lord's words, and so concerned in the miraculous relief resulting from His healing ministrations, that they remained in the wilderness, oblivious to the passing of the hours, until the evening approached. It was the springtime, near the recurrence of the annual Passover festival, the season of grass and flowers.^s Jesus, realizing that the people were hungry, asked Philip, one of the Twelve, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" The purpose of the question was to test the apostle's faith; for the Lord had already determined as to what was to be done. Philip's reply showed surprize at the question, and conveyed his thought that the suggested undertaking was impossible. "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little," said he. Andrew added that there was a lad present who had five barley loaves, and two small fishes, "But," said he, "what are they among so many?"

Such is John's account; the other writers state that the apostles reminded Jesus of the lateness of the hour, and urged that He send the people away to seek for themselves food and lodging in the nearest towns. It appears most probable that the conversation between Jesus and Philip occurred earlier in the afternoon;^t and that as the hours sped,

^r John 6:5-14; compare Matt. 14:15-21; Mark 6:35-44; Luke 9:12-17.

^s John 6:4; Matt. 14:19; Mark 6:39.

^t Note 5, end of chapter.

the Twelve became concerned and advized that the multitude be dismissed. The Master's reply to the apostles was: "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." In amazed wonder they replied: "We have here but five loaves and two fishes;" and Andrew's despairing comment is implied again—What are they among so many?

Jesus gave command, and the people seated themselves on the grass in orderly array; they were grouped in fifties and hundreds; and it was found that the multitude numbered about five thousand men, beside women and children. Taking the loaves and the fishes, Jesus looked toward heaven and pronounced a blessing upon the food; then, dividing the provisions, He gave to the apostles severally, and they in turn distributed to the multitude. The substance of both fish and bread increased under the Master's touch; and the multitude feasted there in the desert, until all were satisfied. To the disciples Jesus said: "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost;" and twelve baskets were filled with the surplus.

As to the miracle itself, human knowledge is powerless to explain. Though wrought on so great a scale, it is no more nor less inexplicable than any other of the Lord's miraculous works. It was a manifestation of creative power, by which material elements were organized and compounded to serve a present and pressing need. The broken but unused portion exceeded in bulk and weight the whole of the original little store. Our Lord's direction to gather up the fragments was an impressive object-lesson against waste; and it may have been to afford such lesson that an excess was supplied. The fare was simple, yet nourishing, wholesome and satisfying. Barley bread and fish constituted the usual food of the poorer classes of the region. The conversion of water into wine at Cana was a qualitative transmutation; the feeding of the multitude involved a quantita-

tive increase; who can say that one, or which, of these miracles of provision was the more wonderful?

The multitude, now fed and filled, gave some consideration to the miracle. In Jesus, by whom so great a work had been wrought, they recognized One having superhuman powers. "This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world," said they—the Prophet whose coming had been foretold by Moses and who should be like unto himself. Even as Israel had been miraculously fed during the time of Moses, so now was bread provided in the desert by this new Prophet. In their enthusiasm the people proposed to proclaim Him king, and forcibly compel Him to become their leader. Such was their gross conception of Messianic supremacy. Jesus directed His disciples to depart by boat, while He remained to dismiss the now excited multitude. The disciples hesitated to leave their Master; but He constrained them and they obeyed. His insistence, that the Twelve depart from both Himself and the multitude, may have been due to a desire to protect the chosen disciples against possible infection by the materialistic and unrighteous designs of the throng to make Him king. By means that are not detailed, He caused the people to disperse; and, as night came on, He found that for which He had come in quest, solitude and quiet. Ascending the hill, He chose a secluded place, and there remained in prayer during the greater part of the night.

"IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID."^u

The return by boat proved to be a memorable journey for the disciples. They encountered a boisterous head-wind, which of course rendered impossible the use of sails; and though they toiled heavily at the oars the vessel became practically unmanageable and wallowed in the midst of the

^u Matt. 14:22-33; compare Mark 6:45-52; John 6:15-21.

sea.^v Though they had labored through the night they had progressed less than four miles on their course; to turn and run before the wind would have been to invite disastrous wreck; their sole hope lay in their holding the vessel to the wind by sheer power of muscle. Jesus, in His place of solitary retirement, was aware of their sad plight, and along in the fourth watch,^w that is, between three and six o'clock in the morning, He came to their assistance, walking upon the storm-tossed water as though treading solid ground. When the voyagers caught sight of Him as He approached the ship in the faint light of the near-spent night, they were overcome by superstitious fears, and cried out in terror, thinking that they saw a ghostly apparition. "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

Relieved by these assuring words, Peter, impetuous and impulsive as usual, cried out: "Lord, if^x it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." Jesus assenting, Peter descended from the ship and walked toward his Master; but as the wind smote him and the waves rose about him, his confidence wavered and he began to sink. Strong swimmer though he was,^y he gave way to fright, and cried, "Lord, save me." Jesus caught him by the hand, saying: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

From Peter's remarkable experience, we learn that the power by which Christ was able to walk the waves could be made operative in others, provided only their faith was enduring. It was on Peter's own request that he was permitted to attempt the feat. Had Jesus forbidden him, the man's faith might have suffered a check; his attempt, though attended by partial failure, was a demonstration of the efficacy of faith in the Lord, such as no verbal teaching could

^v Page 321.

^w Note 6, end of chapter.

^x That is to say, "since" or "inasmuch".

^y Compare Peter's impetuous leap into the sea to reach the resurrected Lord on the shore, John 21:7.

ever have conveyed. Jesus and Peter entered the vessel; immediately the wind ceased, and the boat soon reached the shore. The amazement of the apostles, at this latest manifestation of the Lord's control over the forces of nature, would have been more akin to worship and less like terrified consternation had they remembered the earlier wonders they had witnessed; but they had forgotten even the miracle of the loaves, and their hearts had hardened.^z Marveling at the power of One to whom the wind-lashed sea was a sustaining floor, the apostles bowed before the Lord in reverent worship, saying: "Of a truth thou art the Son of God."^a

Aside from the marvelous circumstances of its literal occurrence, the miracle is rich in symbolism and suggestion. By what law or principle the effect of gravitation was superseded, so that a human body could be supported upon the watery surface, man is unable to affirm. The phenomenon is a concrete demonstration of the great truth that faith is a principle of power, whereby natural forces may be conditioned and controlled.^b Into every adult human life come experiences like unto the battling of the storm-tossed voyagers with contrary winds and threatening seas; oftentimes the night of struggle and danger is far advanced before succor appears; and then, too frequently the saving aid is mistaken for a greater terror. As came unto Peter and his terrified companions in the midst of the turbulent waters, so comes to all who toil in faith, the voice of the Deliverer—"It is I; be not afraid."

IN THE LAND OF GENNESARET.

The night voyage, in the course of which Jesus had reached the boat with its frightened occupants while "in the midst of the sea," ended at some point within the district

^z Mark 6:52.

^a Note that this is the first occurrence of this title in the Synoptic Gospels, as applied to Jesus by mortals; compare an earlier instance of its application by Nathanael, John 1:49.

^b "Articles of Faith," v:11-13—"Faith a Principle of Power."

known as the land of Gennesaret, which, as generally believed, embraced the rich and fertile region in the vicinity of Tiberias and Magdala. Of the natural beauties for which the region was famed much has been written.^c Word of our Lord's presence there spread rapidly, and, from "all that country round about" the people flocked to Him, bringing their afflicted to receive of His beneficence by word or touch. In the towns through which He walked, the sick were laid in the streets that the blessing of His passing might fall upon them; and many "besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole."^d Bounteously did He impart of His healing virtue to all who came asking with faith and confidence. Thus, accompanied by the Twelve, He wended His way northward to Capernaum, making the pathway bright by the plentitude of His mercies.

IN SEARCH OF LOAVES AND FISHES.^e

The multitude who, on the yesterday, had partaken of His bounty on the other side of the lake, and who dispersed for the night after their ineffectual attempt to force upon Him the dignity of earthly kingship, were greatly surprized in the morning to discover that He had departed. They had seen the disciples leave in the only boat there present, while Jesus had remained on shore; and they knew that the night tempest had precluded the possibility of other boats reaching the place. Nevertheless their morning search for Him was futile; and they concluded that He must have returned by land round the end of the lake. As the day advanced some boats were sighted, bound for the western coast; these they hailed, and, securing passage, crossed to Capernaum.

^c Josephus, Wars. iii, 10:7, 8.

^d Mark 6:53-58; compare Matt. 14:34-36. Note 7, end of chapter.

^e John 6:22-27.

Their difficulty in locating Jesus was at an end, for His presence was known throughout the town. Coming to Him, probably as He sat in the synagog, for on this day He taught there, some of the most intrusive of the crowd asked, brusquely and almost rudely, "Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" To this impertinent inquiry Jesus deigned no direct reply; in the miracle of the preceding night the people had no part, and no account of our Lord's movements was given them. In tone of impressive rebuke Jesus said unto them: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." Their concern was for the bread and fishes. One who could supply them with victuals as He had done must not be lost sight of.

The Master's rebuke was followed by admonition and instruction: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." This contrast between material and spiritual food they could not entirely fail to understand, and some of them asked what they should do to serve God as Jesus required. The answer was: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." That Jesus was referring to Himself none could doubt; and straightway they demanded of Him further evidence of His divine commission; they would see greater signs. The miracle of the loaves and fishes was nearly a day old; and its impressiveness as evidence of Messianic attributes was waning. Moses had fed their fathers with manna in the desert, they said; and plainly they regarded a continued daily supply as a greater gift than a single meal of bread and fish, however much the latter may have been appreciated in the exigency of hunger. Moreover, the manna was heavenly food; whereas the bread He had given them was of earth, and only common barley bread

f Note 8, end of chapter.

at that. He must show them greater signs, and give them richer provender, before they would accept Him as the One whom they at first had taken Him to be and whom He now declared Himself to be.

CHRIST, THE BREAD OF LIFE.^g

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." They were mistaken in assuming that Moses had given them manna; and after all, the manna had been but ordinary food in that those who ate of it hungered again; but now the Father offered them bread from heaven such as would insure them life.

As the Samaritan woman at the well, on hearing the Lord speak of water that would satisfy once for all, had begged impulsively and with thought only of physical convenience, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw,"^h so these people, eager to secure so satisfying a food as that of which Jesus spake, implored: "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Perhaps this request was not wholly gross; there may have been in the hearts of some of them at least a genuine desire for spiritual nourishment. Jesus met their appeal with an explanation: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." He reminded them that though they had seen Him they believed not His words; and assured them that those who really accepted Him would do as the Father directed. Then, without metaphor or symbolism, He affirmed: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." And the Father's will was that all who would accept the Son should have everlasting life.

^g John 6:32-59.

^h John 4:13-15; page 174 herein.

There were present in the synagog some of the rulers—Pharisees, scribes, rabbis—and these, designated collectively as the Jews, criticized Jesus, and murmured against Him because He had said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.” They averred that He could do nothing more than any man could do; He was known to them as the son of Joseph, and as far as they knew was of ordinary earthly parentage, and yet He had the temerity to declare that He had come down from heaven. Chiefly to this class rather than to the promiscuous crowd who had hastened after Him, Jesus appears to have addressed the remainder of His discourse. He advized them to cease their murmurings; for it was a certainty that they could not apprehend His meaning, and therefore would not believe Him, unless they had been “taught of God” as the prophets had written;ⁱ and none could come to Him in the sense of accepting His saving gospel unless the Father drew them to the Son; and none save those who were receptive, willing, and prepared, could be so drawn.^j Yet belief in the Son of God is an indispensable condition to salvation, as Jesus indicated in His affirmation: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

Then, reverting to the symbolism of the bread, He reiterated: “I am the bread of life.” In further elucidation He explained that while their fathers did truly eat manna in the wilderness, yet they were dead; whereas the bread of life of which He spake would insure eternal life unto all who partook thereof. That bread, He averred, was His flesh. Against this solemn avowal the Jews complained anew, and disputed among themselves, some asking derisively: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat.” Emphasizing the doctrine, Jesus continued: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood,

ⁱ Isa. 54:13; Jer. 31:34; Micah 4:2; compare Heb. 8:10; 10:16.

^j Note 9, end of chapter.

ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."

There was little excuse for the Jews pretending to understand that our Lord meant an actual eating and drinking of His material flesh and blood. The utterances to which they objected were far more readily understood by them than they are by us on first reading; for the representation of the law and of truth in general as bread, and the acceptance thereof as a process of eating and drinking, were figures in every-day use by the rabbis of that time.^k Their failure to comprehend the symbolism of Christ's doctrine was an act of will, not the natural consequence of innocent ignorance. To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ was and is to believe in and accept Him as the literal Son of God and Savior of the world, and to obey His commandments. By these means only may the Spirit of God become an abiding part of man's individual being, even as the substance of the food he eats is assimilated with the tissues of his body.

It is not sufficing to accept the precepts of Christ as we may adopt the doctrines of scientists, philosophers, and savants, however great the wisdom of these sages may be; for such acceptance is by mental assent or deliberate exercise of will, and has relation to the doctrine only as independent of the author. The teachings of Jesus Christ endure because of their intrinsic worth; and many men respect His aphorisms, proverbs, parables, and His profoundly philosophical precepts, who yet reject Him as the Son of

^k Note 10, end of chapter.

God, the Only Begotten in the flesh, the God-Man in whom were united the attributes of Deity with those of humanity, the chosen and foreordained Redeemer of mankind, through whom alone may salvation be attained. But the figure used by Jesus—that of eating His flesh and drinking His blood as typical of unqualified and absolute acceptance of Himself as the Savior of men, is of superlative import; for thereby are affirmed the divinity of His Person, and the fact of His pre-existent and eternal Godship. The sacrament of the Lord's supper, established by the Savior on the night of His betrayal, perpetuates the symbolism of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, by the partaking of bread and wine in remembrance of Him.¹ Acceptance of Jesus as the Christ implies obedience to the laws and ordinances of His gospel; for to profess the One and refuse the other is but to convict ourselves of inconsistency, insincerity, and hypocrisy.

A CRUCIAL TEST—MANY TURN AWAY.^m

The truth respecting Himself, as taught by the Lord in this, His last, discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum, proved to be a test of faith through which many fell away. Not alone critical Jews of the official class, whose hostility was openly avowed, but those who had professed some measure of belief in Him were affected. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" Jesus, cognizant of their disaffection, asked: "Doth this offend you?" and added: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" His ascension, which was to follow His death and resurrection, is here definitely implied. The spiritual significance of His teachings was put beyond question by the explanation that only through the Spirit could they compre-

¹ Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20. Page 596.

^m John 6:59-71.

hend; "Therefore," He added, "said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

Many deserted Him, and from that time sought Him no more. The occasion was crucial; the effect was that of sifting and separation. The portentous prediction of the Baptist-prophet had entered upon the stage of fulfilment: "One mightier than I cometh, . . . Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."ⁿ The fan was in operation, and much chaff was blown aside.

It appears that even the Twelve were unable to comprehend the deeper meaning of these latest teachings; they were puzzled, though none actually deserted. Nevertheless, the state of mind of some was such as to evoke from Jesus the question: "Will ye also go away?" Peter, speaking for himself and his brethren, answered with pathos and conviction: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."^o The spirit of the Holy Apostleship was manifest in this confession. Though they were unable to comprehend in fulness the doctrine, they knew Jesus to be the Christ, and were faithful to Him while others turned away into the dark depths of apostasy.

While Peter spoke for the apostolic body as a whole, there was among them one who silently revolted; the treacherous Iscariot, who was in worse plight than an openly avowed apostate, was there. The Lord knew this man's heart, and said: "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" The historian adds: "He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."

ⁿ Luke 3:16, 17; Matt. 3:11, 12.

^o Compare this confession (John 6:68, 69) with Peter's later testimony (Matt. 16:16). Note 11, end of chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 21.

1. Jesus at Nazareth.—As no one of the Gospel-writers records two occasions of our Lord's ministry in Nazareth, and as the separate accounts appearing in the synoptic Gospels closely resemble one another in a few particulars, some commentators hold that our Lord preached to His townsmen in Nazareth and was rejected by them but once. Luke's account (4:14-30) refers to an occasion immediately following the first return of Jesus to Galilee after His baptism and temptations, and directly preceding the preliminary call of the fishermen-disciples, who afterward were numbered among the apostles. Matthew (13:53-58) and Mark (6:1-6) chronicle a visit of Jesus to Nazareth later than the occasion of the first teaching in parables, and the events immediately following the same. We have good reason for accepting Luke's record as that of an early incident, and the accounts given by Matthew and Mark as those of a later visit.

2. Gentiles.—In a general way the Jews designated all other peoples as Gentiles; though the same Hebrew word is rendered in the Old Testament variously, as "Gentiles" (Gen. 10:5; Judg. 4:2, 13, 16; Isa. 11:10; etc.), "nations" (Gen. 10:5, 20, 31, 32; 14:1, 9; etc.), and "heathen" (Neh. 5:8; Psa. 2:1, 8, etc.), the essential element of designation being that of foreigners. In Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, we read "It [the name 'Gentiles'] acquired an ethnographic and also an invidious meaning, as other nations were idolatrous, rude, hostile, etc., yet the Jews were able to use it in a purely technical, geographical sense, when it was usually translated 'nations.'" Dr. Edward E. Nourse, writing for the *Standard Bible Dictionary*, says: "In New Testament times, the Jew divided mankind into three classes, (1) Jews, (2) Greeks (Hellenes, made to include Romans, thus meaning the civilized peoples of the Roman Empire, often rendered 'Gentiles' in Authorized Version), and (3) barbarians (the uncivilized, Acts 28:4; Rom. 1:14; 1 Cor. 14:11)." The injunction laid by Jesus upon the Twelve—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles"—was to restrain them for the time being from attempting to make converts among the Romans and Greeks, and to confine their ministry to the people of Israel.

3. Shaking the Dust from the Feet.—To ceremonially shake the dust from one's feet as a testimony against another was understood by the Jews to symbolize a cessation of fellowship and a renunciation of all responsibility for consequences that might follow. It became an ordinance of accusation and testimony by the Lord's instructions to His apostles as cited in the text. In the current dispensation, the Lord has similarly directed His authorized servants to so testify against those who wilfully and maliciously oppose the truth when authoritatively presented (see Doc. and Cov. 24:15; 60:15; 75:20; 84:92; 99:4). The responsibility of testifying before the Lord by this accusing symbo-

is so great that the means may be employed only under unusual and extreme conditions, as the Spirit of the Lord may direct.

4. The Two Bethsaidas.—It is held by many Bible students that Bethsaida, in the desert region adjoining which Jesus and the Twelve sought rest and seclusion, was the town of that name in Perea, on the eastern side of the Jordan, and known more specifically as Bethsaida Julias to distinguish it from Bethsaida in Galilee, which latter was close to Capernaum. The Perean village of Bethsaida had been enlarged and raised to the rank of a town by the tetrarch, Philip, and by him had been named Julias in honor of Julia, daughter of the reigning emperor. The Gospel narratives of the voyage by which Jesus and His companions reached the place, and of the return therefrom, are conformable to the assumption that Bethsaida Julias in Perea and not Bethsaida in Galilee, was the town to which the "desert place" referred to was an outlying district.

5. The Earlier and the Later Evening.—Matthew specifies two evenings of the day on which the five thousand were fed; thus "when it was evening" the disciples asked Jesus to send away the multitude; and later, after the miraculous feeding and after the disciples had left by boat, and after the crowds had departed, "when the evening was come" Jesus was alone on the mountain (Matt. 14:15, 23; compare Mark 6:35, 47). Trench *Notes on the Miracles*, (p. 217) says: "St. Matthew and St. Mark with him, makes two evenings to this day—one which had already commenced before the preparations for the feeding of the multitude had begun (verse 15), the other now, when the disciples had entered into the ship and set forth on their voyage (verse 23). And this was an ordinary way of speaking among the Jews, the first evening being very much our afternoon. . . . the second evening being the twilight, or from six o'clock to twilight, on which absolute darkness followed." See Smith's *Dict.*, article "Chronology," from which the following excerpt is taken: "'Between the two evenings' (margin of Exo. 12:6; Numb. 9:3; 28:4) is a natural division between the late afternoon when the sun is low, and the evening when his light has not wholly disappeared, the two evenings into which the natural evening would be cut by the commencement of the civil day if it began at sunset."

6. Watches of the Night.—During the greater part of Old Testament time, the people of Israel divided the night into three watches, each of four hours, such a period being that of individual sentinel duty. Before the beginning of the Christian era, however, the Jews had adopted the Roman order of four night-watches, each lasting three hours. These were designated numerically, e. g. the fourth watch mentioned in the text (see Matt. 14:25), or as even, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning (see Mark 13:35). The fourth watch was the last of the three-hour periods between sunset and sunrise, or between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. and therefore extended from 3 to 6 o'clock in the morning.

7. The Hem of the Garment.—The faith of those who believed that if they could but touch the border of the Lord's garment they would be healed, is in line with that of the woman

who was healed of her long-standing malady by so touching His robe (see Matt. 9:21; Mark 5:27, 28; Luke 8:44). The Jews regarded the border or hem of their outer robes as of particular importance, because of the requirement made of Israel in earlier days (Numb. 15:38, 39) that the border be fringed and supplied with a band of blue, as a reminder to them of their obligations as the covenant people. The desire to touch the hem of Christ's robe may have been associated with this thought of sanctity attaching to the hem or border.

8. Traditions Concerning Manna.—The supplying of manna to the Israelites incident to the exodus and the long travel in the wilderness, was rightly regarded as a work of surpassing wonder (Exo. 16:14-36; Numb. 11:7-9; Deut. 8:3, 16; Josh. 5:12; Psa. 78:24, 25). Many traditions, some of them perniciously erroneous, gathered about the incident, and were transmitted with invented additions from generation to generation. In the time of Christ the rabbinical teaching was that the manna on which the fathers had fed was literally the food of the angels, sent down from heaven; and that it was of diverse taste and flavor to suit all ages, conditions, or desires; to one it tasted like honey, to another as bread, etc.; but in all Gentile mouths it was bitter. Moreover it was said that the Messiah would give an unfailing supply of manna to Israel when He came amongst them. These erroneous conceptions in part explain the demand of those who had been fed on barley loaves and fishes, for a sign that would surpass the giving of manna in the olden days, as evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus.

9. Faith a Gift of God.—“Though within the reach of all who diligently strive to gain it, faith is nevertheless a divine gift, and can be obtained only from God (Matt. 16:17; John 6:44, 65; Eph. 2:8; 1 Cor. 12:9; Rom. 12:3; Moroni 10:11). As is fitting for so priceless a pearl, it is given to those only who show by their sincerity that they are worthy of it, and who give promise of abiding by its dictates. Although faith is called the first principle of the Gospel of Christ, though it be in fact the foundation of all religion, yet even faith is preceded by sincerity of disposition and humility of soul, whereby the word of God may make an impression upon the heart (Rom. 10:17). No compulsion is used in bringing men to a knowledge of God; yet, as fast as we open our hearts to the influences of righteousness, the faith that leads to life eternal will be given us of our Father.”—*Articles of Faith*, v:16.

10. Spiritual Symbolism of Eating.—“The idea of eating, as a metaphor for receiving spiritual benefit, was familiar to Christ's hearers, and was as readily understood as our expressions—‘devouring a book,’ or ‘drinking in’ instruction. In Isaiah 3:1, the words ‘the whole stay of bread,’ were explained by the rabbis as referring to their own teaching, and they laid it down as a rule, that wherever, in Ecclesiastes, allusion was made to food or drink, it meant study of the law, and the practise of good works. It was a saying among them—‘In the time of the Messiah the Israelites will be fed by Him.’ Nothing was more common in

the schools and synagogues than the phrases of eating and drinking, in a metaphorical sense. 'Messiah is not likely to come to Israel,' said Hillel, 'for they have already eaten Him'—that is, greedily received His words—in the days of Hezekiah.' A current conventionalism in the synagogues was that the just would 'eat the Shekinah.' It was peculiar to the Jews to be taught in such metaphorical language. Their rabbis never spoke in plain words, and it is expressly said that Jesus submitted to the popular taste, for 'without a parable spake he not unto them' (Mark 4:34)."—Geikie, *Life and Words of Christ*, vol. i, p. 184.

II. The Crucial Nature of the Discourse.—Commenting on the effect of our Lord's discourse (John 6:26-71), Edersheim (vol. ii, p. 36) says: "Here then we are at the parting of the two ways; and, just because it was the hour of decision, did Christ so clearly set forth the highest truths concerning Himself, in opposition to the views which the multitude entertained about the Messiah. The result was yet another and a sorer defection. Upon this many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Nay, the searching trial reached even unto the hearts of the Twelve. Would they also go away? It was an anticipation of Gethsemane—its first experience. But one thing kept them true. It was the experience of the past. This was the basis of their present faith and allegiance. They could not go back to their old past; they must cleave to Him. So Peter spake it in name of them all: Lord, to whom shall we go? Words of eternal life hast thou! Nay, and more than this, as the result of what they had learned: And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God. It is thus, also, that many of us, whose thoughts may have been sorely tossed, and whose foundations terribly assailed, may have found our first resting-place in the assured, unassailable spiritual experience of the past. Whither can we go for words of eternal life, if not to Christ? If He fails us, then all hope of the eternal is gone. But He has the words of eternal life—and we believed when they first came to us; nay, we know that He is the Holy One of God. And this conveys all that faith needs for further learning. The rest will He show when He is transfigured in our sight. But of these Twelve Christ knew one to be a devil—like that angel, fallen from highest height to lowest depth. The apostasy of Judas had already commenced in his heart. And the greater the popular expectancy and disappointment had been, the greater the reaction and the enmity that followed. The hour of decision was past, and the hand on the dial pointed to the hour of His death."

CHAPTER 22.

A PERIOD OF DARKENING OPPOSITION.

Our Lord's last recorded discourse in the synagog at Capernaum, which followed close upon the miracle of feeding the five thousand and that of walking upon the water, marked the beginning of another epoch in the development of His life's work. It was the season of an approaching Passover festival;^a and at the next succeeding Passover, one year later, as shall be shown, Jesus would be betrayed to His death. At the time of which we now speak, therefore, He was entering upon the last year of His ministry in the flesh. But the significance of the event is other and greater than that of a chronological datum-plane. The circumstance marked the first stage of a turn in the tide of popular regard toward Jesus, which theretofore had been increasing, and which now began to ebb. True, He had been repeatedly criticized and openly assailed by complaining Jews on many earlier occasions; but these crafty and even venomous critics were mostly of the ruling classes; the common people had heard Him gladly, and indeed many of them continued so to do;^b nevertheless His popularity, in Galilee at least, had begun to wane. The last year of His earthly ministrations was inaugurated by a sifting of the people who professed to believe His word, and this process of test, trial, and separation, was to continue to the end.

We are without information as to Jesus having attended this Passover feast; and it is reasonable to infer that in view of the increasing hostility on the part of the rulers, He refrained from going to Jerusalem on the occasion. Conjecture

^a John 6:4. Note 1, end of chapter.

^b Mark 12:37.

as to whether any of the Twelve went up to the festival is profitless; we are not told. Certain it is that immediately after this time, the detectives and spies who had been sent from Jerusalem into Galilee to watch Jesus, became more active than ever in their critical espionage. They dogged His footsteps, noted every act, and every instance of omission of traditional or customary observance, and were constantly on the alert to make Him out an offender.

CEREMONIAL WASHINGS, "AND MANY SUCH LIKE THINGS."^c

Shortly after the Passover to which allusion has been made, and probably in accordance with a plan decided upon by the Jewish rulers, Jesus was visited by a delegation of Pharisees and scribes who had come from Jerusalem, and who made protest against the disregard of traditional requirements by His followers. It appears that the disciples, and almost certainly the Master Himself, had so far transgressed "the tradition of the elders" as to omit the ceremonial washing of hands before eating; the Pharisaic critics found fault, and came demanding explanation, and justification if such were possible. Mark tells us that the disciples were charged with having eaten with "defiled", or, as the marginal reading gives it, with "common" hands; and he interpolates the following concise and lucid note concerning the custom which the disciples were said to have ignored: "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables."^d It should be borne in mind that

^c Matt. 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13.

^d As the Oxford marginal note shows "beds" is a more literal rendering than "tables", the couches upon which the eaters reclined at table being meant. See page 261.

the offense charged against the disciples was that of ceremonial uncleanness, not physical uncleanliness or disregard of sanitary propriety; they were said to have eaten with common or defiled hands, not specifically with dirty fingers. In all the externals of their man-made religionism, the Jews were insistent on scrupulous exactitude; every possibility of ceremonial defilement was to be carefully guarded against, and the effects thereof had to be counteracted by prescribed washings.^e

To the question: "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread", Jesus gave no direct reply; but asked as a rejoinder: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" To the Pharisaic mind this must have been a very sharp rebuke; for rabbinism held that rigorous compliance with the traditions of the elders was more important than observance of the law itself; and Jesus in His counter question put their cherished traditions as in direct conflict with the commandment of God. Adding to their discomfiture, He cited the prophecy of Isaiah, and applied to them whom He designated hypocrites, the prophet's words: "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."^f With deserved severity Jesus carried the lesson home to their consciences, declaring that they had laid aside the commandments of God in order that they might follow the traditions of men.

This accusing affirmation was followed by the citing of an undeniable instance: Moses had voiced the direct commandment of God in saying: "Honour thy father and thy

^e Note 2, end of chapter.

^f Mark 7:6, 7; see also Matt. 15:7-9; Isa. 29:13; compare the words of the resurrected Christ to the prophet Joseph Smith, in the present dispensation, P. of G. P., Joseph Smith, 2:19.

mother," and had proclaimed the ordained penalty in extreme cases of unfilial conduct thus: "Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die";^g but this law, though given of God direct to Israel, had been so completely superseded that any ungrateful and wicked son could find ready means, which their traditions had made lawful, of escaping all filial obligations, even though his parents were destitute. If a needy father or mother craved help of a son, he had but to say—What you ask of me is Corban—or in other words, an intended gift to God; and he was held to be legally exempt from all requirements to contribute of that substance to the support of his parents.^h Other obligations could be similarly evaded. To declare that any article of property real or personal, or any part or proportion of one's possessions was "corban," was generally understood as an averment that the property so characterized was dedicated to the temple, or at least was intended to be devoted to ecclesiastical purposes, and would eventually be turned over to the officials, though the donor might continue to hold possession during a specified period, extending even to the end of his life. Property was often declared to be "corban" for other purposes than dedication to ecclesiastical use. The result of such established though utterly unlawful and pernicious traditions was, as Jesus emphatically stated to the Pharisees and scribes, to make the word of God of none effect, and, He added, "Many such like things do ye."

Turning from His titled visitors, He called the people together and proclaimed unto them the truth, as follows: "Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." This was directly in conflict with rabbinical pre-

^g Compare Exo. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Exo. 21:17; Lev. 20:9.

^h Note 3, end of chapter.

cept and practise ; the Pharisees were offended, for they had said that to eat with hands that had not been ritualistically cleansed was to defile the food touched, and in turn to become yet more defiled from the food thus rendered unclean.

The apostles were not sure that they understood the Master's lesson ; though couched in plain, non-figurative language, it was to some of them very like a parable, and Peter asked an exposition. The Lord explained that the food one eats is but temporarily part of his body ; having served its purpose of nourishing the tissues and supplying energy to the organism, it is eliminated ; therefore the food that enters the body through the mouth is of small and transient importance compared with the utterances that issue from the mouth, for these, if evil, are truly defiling. As Jesus set forth : "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart ; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies : these are the things which defile a man ; but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man."ⁱ

Some of the disciples asked Jesus whether He knew that the Pharisees had taken offense at His saying ; His answer was a further denunciation of Pharisaism : "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone : they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." There could be no compromize between His doctrine of the kingdom and the corrupt Judaism of the time. The rulers were plotting against His life ; if their emissaries chose to take offense at His words, let them be offended and stand the consequences ; but blessed would they be if they were not offended because of Him.^j He had no conciliatory measures to offer those whose inability to understand His

ⁱ Matt. 15:10-20; compare Mark 7:14-23.

^j Matt. 11:6; Luke 7:23; pages 255 and 274 herein.

meaning was the result of wilful obstinacy, or darkness of mind produced by persistence in sin.

WITHIN THE BORDERS OF TYRE AND SIDON.^k

Unable to find in Galilee rest, seclusion, or adequate opportunity of instructing the Twelve as He desired to do, Jesus departed with them northward, and journeyed into the coasts or borders of Phenicia, a district commonly known by the names of its prominent cities, Tyre and Sidon. In one of the little towns near the border, the party took lodgings; but the attempt to secure privacy was futile, for the Master's presence "could not be hid." His fame had preceded Him beyond the boundaries of the land of Israel. On earlier occasions, people from the region of Tyre and Sidon had been among His listeners, and some of them had been blessed by His healing mercies.^l

A woman, hearing of His presence within her own land, came asking a boon. Mark tells us she was a Greek, or more literally a Gentile^m who spoke Greek, and by nationality a Syro-Phenician; Matthew says she was "a woman of Canaan"; these statements are in harmony, since the Phenicians were of Canaanite descent. The Gospel-historians make clear the fact that this woman was of pagan or heathen birth; and we know that among the peoples so classed the Canaanites were held in particular disrepute by the Jews. The woman cried aloud to Jesus, saying: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Her words expressed at once faith in the Lord's power, and a fulness of mother-love, for she implored as though she were the afflicted sufferer. The fact that she addressed Jesus as Son of David demonstrates her belief that He was the Messiah of Israel. At first Jesus re-

^k Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30.

^l Mark 3:8; Luke 6:17.

^m See marginal reading in Oxford and Bagster Bibles; see also Note 2, page 345.

frained from answering her. Undeterred, she pleaded the more, until the disciples besought the Lord saying: "Send her away; for she crieth after us." Their intervention was probably an intercession in her behalf; she could be quieted by the granting of her request; as it was, she was making an undesirable scene, probably on the street, and the Twelve knew well that their Master sought quietude. To them Jesus said: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and the remark must have reminded them of the restriction under which they had been sent out.ⁿ

The woman, with importunate desire came near, possibly entering the house; she fell at the Lord's feet and worshiped Him, pleading pitifully, "Lord, help me." To her Jesus said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." The words, harsh as they may sound to us, were understood by her in the spirit of the Lord's intent. The original term here translated "dogs" connoted, as the narrative shows, not the vagrant and despized curs elsewhere spoken of in the Bible as typical of a degraded state, or of positive badness,^o but literally the "little dogs" or domestic pets, such as were allowed in the house and under the table. Certainly the woman took no offense at the comparison, and found therein no objectionable epithet. Instantly she adopted the analogy, and applied it in combined argument and supplication.^p "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table;" or, in the words of Mark's version: "Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." Her prayer was immediately granted; for Jesus said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Mark emphasizes the special recognition of her final plea, and adds: "And

ⁿ Matt. 10:5, 6; see also page 328 herein.

^o Deut. 23:18; 1 Sam. 17:43; 24:14; 2 Sam. 3:8; 16:9; Job 30:1; Matt. 7:6; Philip 3:2; Rev. 22:15.

^p Note 4, end of chapter.

when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.” The woman’s commendable persistency was based on the faith that overcomes apparent obstacles and endures even under discouragement. Her case reminds one of the lesson taught by the Lord on another occasion through the story of the unfortunate widow.^q

Many have queried as to why Jesus delayed the blessing. We may not be able to fathom His purposes; but we see that, by the course He adopted, the woman’s faith was demonstrated and the disciples were instructed. Jesus impressed upon her that she was not of the chosen people, to whom He had been sent; but His words prefigured the giving of the gospel to all, both Jew and Gentile: “Let the children *first* be filled” He had said. The resurrected Christ was to be made known to every nation;^r but His personal ministry as a mortal, as also that of the apostles while He was with them in the flesh, was directed to the house of Israel.^s

IN THE COASTS OF DECAPOLIS.^t

We are not told how long Jesus and the Twelve tarried in the land of Tyre and Sidon, nor which portions of the district they traversed. They went thence into the region adjoining the sea of Galilee on the east, “through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.”^u Though still among semi-pagan peoples, our Lord was greeted by great crowds, amongst whom were many lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and otherwise afflicted; and them He healed. Great was the astonishment of these aliens, “when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.”

^q Luke 18:1-8. Page 436.

^r Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15.

^s Acts 3:25, 26; 13:46-48; Rom. 15:8.

^t Mark 7:31-37; compare Matt. 15:29-31.

^u Note 5, end of chapter.

Among the many who were healed was one of whom special mention is made. He was deaf and defective in speech. The people asked the Lord to lay His hands upon the man; but Jesus led him away from the multitude, put His fingers in the man's ears, spat, and touched the man's tongue; then looking upward in prayer, and sighing the while, He uttered a word of command in Aramaic, "Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain." The manner of effecting this cure was different again from the usual mode of our Lord's healing ministrations. It may be that by the finger-touch to the closed ears and to the bound tongue, the man's faith was strengthened and his confidence in the Master's power increased. The people were forbidden to tell abroad what they had witnessed; but the more they were charged the more they published the news. Their conclusion as to Jesus and His works was: "He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

ANOTHER MEAL IN THE DESERT; OVER FOUR THOUSAND FED.^v

For three days the glad crowds remained with Jesus and the apostles. Camping out at that season and in that region entailed no great hardship incident to exposure. Their supply of food, however, had become exhausted; and many of them were far from home. Jesus had compassion upon the people, and was loath to send them away fasting, lest they would faint by the way. When He spoke to the disciples on the matter they intimated the impossibility of feeding so great a number, for the entire stock of food at hand comprised but seven loaves and a few little fishes. Had they forgotten the former occasion on which a greater multitude had been fed and filled with but five loaves and two small

^v Matt. 15:32-39; Mark 8:1-9.

fishes? Rather let us believe that the disciples remembered well, yet deemed it beyond their duty or privilege to suggest a repetition of the miracle. But the Master commanded; and the people seated themselves on the ground. Blessing and dividing the small provision as before, He gave to the disciples and they distributed to the multitude. Four thousand men, beside women and children, were abundantly fed; and of the broken but uneaten food there remained enough to fill seven baskets. With no semblance of the turbulent enthusiasm that had followed the feeding of the five thousand, this multitude dispersed quietly and returned to their homes, grateful and doubly blessed.

AGAIN BESET BY SIGN-SEEKERS.^w

Jesus and the apostles returned by boat to the western shore of the lake, and landed near Magdala and Dalmanutha. These towns are understood to have been so close together as to virtually make the latter a suburb of the other. Here the party was met by the ever-vigilant Pharisees, who on this occasion were accompanied by their usually unfriendly rivals, the Sadducees. That the two parties had temporarily laid aside their mutual differences, and had combined their forces in the common cause of opposition to Christ, is a demonstration of the determined purpose of the ecclesiastical authorities to find occasion against Him, and, if possible, destroy Him. Their immediate object was to further alienate the common people, and to counteract the influence of His former teachings with the masses. They set anew the old-time snare of demanding from Him a supernatural sign of His Messiahship, though thrice already had they or others of their kind so attempted to entrap Him, and thrice had they been foiled.^x Before them, Satan in person had similarly tried and failed.^y To their present impertinent

^w Matt. 15:29; 16:1-5; Mark 8:10-13.

^x John 2:18; 6:30; Matt. 12:38.

^y Matt. 4:6, 7; Luke 4:9-12.

and impious demand He gave a brief and definite refusal coupled with an exposure of their hypocrisy. This was His reply: "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed."^a

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND OF THE SADDUCEES.^b

Again with the Twelve upon the water, since on the Galilean coast neither peace nor opportunity for effective teaching was found, Jesus directed the vessel's course toward the north-easterly shore. When well out from land, He said to His companions: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," and, as Mark adds, "and of the leaven of Herod." In their hasty departure the disciples had forgotten to take a supply of food; they had with them but a single loaf. They construed His words respecting leaven as a reference to bread, and possibly as a reproof for their neglect. Jesus chided them as of little faith for thinking then of material bread, and refreshed their recollection of the miracles by which the multitudes had been fed, so that their lack of loaves would not further trouble them. Finally they were made to understand that the Master's warning was directed against the false doctrines of the Pharisees and those of the Sadducees, and against the political aspirations of the scheming Herodians.^b

The party left the boat near the site of the first miraculous feeding of the multitude, and made their way to Beth-

^a Matt. 16:2-4; compare 12:38-41; pages 155-157 herein.

^b Matt. 16:6-12; Mark 8:14-21; compare Luke 12:1.

^b Page 68.

said a Julias. A blind man was brought, and Jesus was asked to touch him. He took the sightless one by the hand, led him outside the town, applied saliva to his eyes, laid hands upon him in a ministration, and asked him if he could see. The man answered that he saw dimly, but was unable to distinguish men from trees. Applying His hands to the man's eyes, Jesus told him to look up; the man did so and saw clearly. Bidding him not to enter the town, nor to tell of his deliverance from blindness to any in the place, the Lord sent him away rejoicing. This miracle presents the unique feature of Jesus healing a person by stages; the result of the first ministration was but a partial recovery. No explanation of the exceptional circumstance is given.

“THOU ART THE CHRIST.”^c

Accompanied by the Twelve, Jesus continued His way northward to the neighborhood or “coasts” of Cæsarea Philippi, an inland city situated near the eastern and principal source of the Jordan, and near the foot of Mount Hermon.^d The journey afforded opportunity for special and confidential instruction to the apostles. Of them Jesus asked: “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” In reply they reported the rumors and popular fancies that had come to their notice. Some people, sharing the superstitious fears of the conscience-stricken Herod Antipas, said that Jesus was John the Baptist returned to life, though such a belief could not have been entertained seriously by many, as John and Jesus were known to have been contemporaries; others said He was Elias, or more exactly, Elijah; still others suggested He was Jeremiah or some other one of the ancient prophets of Israel. It is significant that among all the conceptions of the people as to the identity of Jesus there was no intimation of belief that He was the Messiah. Neither

^c Matt. 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21. Note 10, end of chapter.

^d Note 6, end of chapter.

by word nor deed had He measured up to the popular and traditional standard of the expected Deliverer and King of Israel. Fleeting manifestations of evanescent hope that He might prove to be the looked-for Prophet, like unto Moses, had not been lacking; but all such incipient conceptions had been neutralized by the hostile activity of the Pharisees and their kind. To them it was a matter of supreme though evil determination to maintain in the minds of the people the thought of a yet future, not a present, Messiah.

With deep solemnity, and as a soul-searching test for which the Twelve had been in unconscious preparation through many months of close and privileged companionship with their Lord, Jesus asked of them: "But whom say ye that I am?" Answering for all, but more particularly testifying as to his own conviction, Peter, with all the fervor of his soul, voiced the great confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This was no avowal of mere belief, no expression of a result at which he had arrived by mental process, no solution of a problem laboriously worked out, no verdict based on the weighing of evidence; he spoke in the sure knowledge that knows no question and from which doubt and reservation are as far removed as is the sky from the ground.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Peter's knowledge, which was also that of his brethren, was of a kind apart from all that man may find out for himself; it was a divine bestowal, in comparison with which human wisdom is foolishness and the treasure of earth but dross. Addressing Himself further to the first of the apostles, Jesus continued: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt

bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Through direct revelation from God Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ; and upon revelation, as a rock of secure foundation, the Church of Christ was to be built.^e Though torrents should fall, floods roll, winds rage, and all beat together upon that structure, it would not, could not, fall, for it was founded upon a rock;^f and even the powers of hell would be impotent to prevail against it. By revelation alone could or can the Church of Jesus Christ be buiiled and maintained; and revelation of necessity implies revelators, through whom the will of God may be made known respecting His Church. As a gift from God comes the testimony of Jesus into the heart of man. This principle was comprised in the Master's teachings at Capernaum, that none could come to Him save such as the Father would bring.^g The Lord's promise, that unto Peter He would give "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," embodies the principle of divine authority in the Holy Priesthood, and of the commission of presidency. Allusion to keys as symbolical of power and authority is not uncommon in Jewish literature, as was well understood in that period and is generally current to-day.^h So also the analogies of binding and loosing as indicative of official acts were then usual, as they are now, particularly in connection with judicial functions. Peter's presidency among the apostles was abundantly manifest and generally recognized after the close of our Lord's mortal life. Thus, it was he who spoke in behalf of the Eleven, in the council meeting at which a successor to the traitor Iscariot was chosen; he was the spokesman of his brethren on the occasion of the Pentecostal conversion; it was he who opened

^e Note 7, end of chapter.

^f Compare Matt. 7:24, 25.

^g John 6:46; compare verses 37, 39, 40.

^h See Isa. 22:22; Luke 11:52; Rev. 1:18; 3:7; compare Doc. and Cov. 6:28; 7:7; 27:5, 6, 9; 28:7; 42:69; 84:26; etc.

the doors of the Church to the Gentiles;ⁱ and his office of leadership is apparent throughout the apostolic period.

The confession by which the apostles avowed their acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, was evidence of their actual possession of the spirit of the Holy Apostleship, by which they were made particular witnesses of their Lord. The time for a general proclamation of their testimony had not arrived, however; nor did it come until after Christ had emerged from the tomb a resurrected, immortalized Personage. For the time being they were charged "that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." Proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah, particularly if made by the apostles who were publicly known as His most intimate disciples and associates, or open assumption of the Messianic title by Himself, would have aggravated the hostility of the rulers, which had already become a grave interference if not an actual menace to the Savior's ministry; and seditious uprisings against the political government of Rome might easily have resulted. A yet deeper reason for the secrecy enjoined upon the Twelve appears in the fact that the Jewish nation was not prepared to accept their Lord; and to ignore Him through lack of certain knowledge involved a lesser degree of culpability than would have attached to an unpalliated rejection. The particular mission of the apostles at a time then future was to proclaim to all nations Jesus, the crucified and resurrected Christ.

From the time of Peter's confession, however, Jesus instructed the Twelve more plainly and with greater intimacy concerning the future developments of His mission, and particularly as touching His appointed death. On earlier occasions He had referred in their hearing to the cross, and to His approaching death, burial, and ascension; but the mention in each case was in a measure figurative, and they had apprehended but imperfectly if at all. Now, however,

ⁱ Acts 1:15-26; 2:14-40; chap. 10, compare with 15:7.

He began to show, and often afterward made plain unto them, "how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

Peter was shocked at this unqualified declaration, and, yielding to impulse, remonstrated with Jesus, or, as two of the evangelists state, "began to rebuke him," even going so far as to say: "This shall not be unto thee."^j The Lord turned upon him with this sharp reproof: "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Peter's words constituted an appeal to the human element in Christ's nature; and the sensitive feelings of Jesus were wounded by this suggestion of unfaithfulness to His trust, coming from the man whom He had so signally honored but a few moments before. Peter saw mainly as men see, understanding but imperfectly the deeper purposes of God. Though deserved, the rebuke he received was severe. The adjuration, "Get thee behind me, Satan," was identical with that used against the arch-tempter himself, who had sought to beguile Jesus from the path upon which He had entered,^k and the provocation in the two instances was in some respects similar—the temptation to evade sacrifice and suffering, though such was the world's ransom, and to follow a more comfortable way.^l The forceful words of Jesus show the deep emotion that Peter's ill-considered attempt to counsel if not to tempt his Lord had evoked.

Beside the Twelve, who were immediately about the Lord's person, others were nearby; it appears that even in those remote parts, far removed from the borders of Galilee—the habitat of a heathen population, with whom, however, many Jews were intermixed—the people gathered around the Master. These He now called together, and to them and the

^j Matt. 16:22, 23; Mark 8:32, 33.

^k Luke 4:8.

^l Note 8, end of chapter.

disciples said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Here the frightful figure of the cross was again made prominent. There was left no shadow of excuse for the thought that devotion to Christ would not mean denial and privation. He who would save his life at the cost of duty, as Peter had just suggested that Christ should do, would surely lose it in a sense worse than that of physical death; whereas he who stood willing to lose all, even life itself, should find the life that is eternal.

As evincing the soundness of His teachings, Jesus uttered what has since become an inspiring aphorism of life: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Whosoever is ashamed of Christ because of His lowly estate, or through offense at His teachings, shall yet find that the Son of Man, when He comes in the glory of the Father, with attending cohorts of angels, will be ashamed of that man. The record of this memorable day in the Savior's life closes with His blessed promise: "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."^m

NOTES TO CHAPTER 22.

1. Passover Celebrations Comprized within the Period of Our Lord's Public Ministry.—The dates on which specific acts occurred in the ministry of Jesus are difficult if not impossible to fix, except in few instances; and as heretofore stated and reiterated, even the order of events is often found to be uncertain. It will be remembered that Jesus was in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover soon after His baptism, and that on the visit referred to He forcibly cleared the temple courts of traffickers and their property. This is known as the *first* Passover during the public life of Jesus. If the unnamed "feast of the Jews" referred to by John (5:1) was a Passover, as many Bible students hold, it marked the close of the year following the cleansing the temple; it is commonly spoken of and written about as the *second* Passover in the course of our Lord's ministry. Then the Passover near which Jesus fed the five thousand

^m Note 9, end of chapter.

(John 6:4) would be the *third*, and would mark the expiration of two years and a fraction since the baptism of Jesus; it certainly marks the beginning of the last year of the Savior's life on earth.

2. Ceremonial Ablutions.—The numerous washings required by Jewish custom in the time of Christ were admittedly incident to rabbinism and "the tradition of the elders" and not in compliance with the Mosaic law. Under certain conditions, successive washings were prescribed, in connection with which we find mention of "first," "second" and "other" waters, the "second water" being necessary to wash away the "first water," which had become defiled by contact with the "common" hands; and so further with the later waters. Sometimes the hands had to be dipped or immersed; at other times they were to be cleansed by pouring, it being necessary that the water be allowed to run to the wrist or the elbow according to the degree of supposed defilement; then again, as the disciples of Rabbi Shammai held, only the finger tips, or the fingers up to the knuckles, needed to be wetted under particular circumstances. Rules for the cleansing of vessels and furniture were detailed and exacting; distinct methods applied respectively to vessels of clay, wood, and metal. Fear of unwittingly defiling the hands led to many extreme precautions. It being known that the Roll of the Law, the Roll of the Prophets, and other scriptures, when laid away were sometimes touched, scratched, or even gnawed by mice, there was issued a rabbinical decree, that the Holy Scriptures, or any part thereof comprising as many as eighty-five letters (the shortest section in the law having just that number), defiled the hands by mere contact. Thus the hands had to be ceremonially cleansed after touching a copy of the scriptures, or even a written passage therefrom.

Emancipation from these and "many such like things" must have been relief indeed. Escape from this thraldom Jesus freely offered, saying: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30.)

3. "Corban," a Gift.—The law of Moses prescribed rules relating to vows (Lev. 27; Numb. 30). "Upon these rules," says the writer in Smith's *Bible Dict.*, "the traditionalists enlarged, and laid down that a man might interdict himself by vow, not only from using for himself, but from giving to another or receiving from him, some particular object whether of food or any other kind whatsoever. The thing thus interdicted was considered as corban. A person might thus exempt himself from any inconvenient obligation under plea of corban. Our Lord denounced practises of this sort (Matt. 15:5; Mark 7:11), as annulling the spirit of the law."

The revised version, Matt. 15:5 is made to read "But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is given to God; he shall not honor his father (or, his mother)." The fol-

lowing account of this pernicious custom appears in the *Commentary on The Holy Bible* edited by Dummelow, "‘Corban,’ meaning originally a sacrifice or a gift to God, was used in New Testament times as a mere word of vowed, without implying that the thing vowed would actually be offered or given to God. Thus a man would say ‘Corban to me is wine for such a time,’ meaning that he took a vow to abstain from wine. Or a man would say to a friend ‘Corban to me for such a time is whatsoever I might be profited by thee,’ meaning that for such a time he vowed that he would receive neither hospitality nor any other benefit from his friend. Similarly, if a son said to his father or mother, ‘Corban is whatsoever thou mightest have profited by me’ he took a vow not to assist his father or mother in any way, however much they might require it. A vow of this kind was held by the scribes to excuse a man from the duty of supporting his parents, and thus by their tradition they made void the word of God.”

4. The “Dogs” that Eat of the Crumbs.—The woman’s fervid rejoinder, “Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table,” (Matt. 15:27), is thus commented upon and paraphrased by Trench (*Notes on the Miracles*, p. 271): “The rendering of her answer in our translation is not, however, altogether satisfactory. For, indeed, she accepts the Lord’s declaration, not immediately to make exception against the conclusion which He draws from it, but to show how in that very declaration is involved the granting of her petition. ‘Saidest thou dogs? It is well; I accept the title and the place; for the dogs have a portion of the meal,—not the first, not the children’s portion, but a portion still,—the crumbs which fall from the master’s table. In this very putting of the case, Thou bringest us heathen, Thou bringest me, within the circle of the blessings which God, the Great Householder, is ever dispensing to His family. We also belong to His household, though we occupy but the lowest place therein.’”

The Dummelow *Commentary*, on Matt. 15:26, reads in part as follows: “The rabbis often spoke of the Gentiles as dogs, e. g. ‘He who eats with an idolater is like one who eats with a dog.’ . . . ‘The nations of the world are compared to dogs.’ ‘The holy convocation belongs to you, not to the dogs.’ Yet Jesus in adopting the contemptuous expression slightly softens it. He says not ‘dogs,’ but ‘little dogs,’ i. e. household, favorite, dogs; and the woman cleverly catches at the expression, arguing that if the Gentiles are household dogs, then it is only right that they should be fed with the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” Edersheim, referring to the original text, says: “The term means ‘little dogs,’ or ‘house dogs.’”

5. Decapolis.—The name means “the ten cities,” and was applied to a region of indefinite boundaries lying mostly on the east of Jordan and southerly from the sea of Galilee. Scythopolis, which Josephus (*Wars of the Jews*, iii, 9:7) refers to as the largest of the ten cities, was on the west side of the river. There is lack of agreement among historians as to the cities comprised

under the name. Biblical mention (Matt. 4:25; Mark 5:20; 7:31) implies a general region rather than a definite area.

6. **The Coasts of Cæsarea Philippi.**—The term "coast" as it appears in the Bible (authorized, or King James version), is used to connote boundary, limit, or border, and not distinctively a seashore. (For examples see Exo. 10:4, 14, 19; Josh. 15:1, 4; Judg. 11:20; Matt. 2:16, etc.) It is applied therefore to inland areas, and frequently occurs as indicating a vicinity or neighborhood.

Cæsarea Philippi, a town located, as stated in the text, near Mount Hermon at the source of the Jordan, had been enlarged and beautified by Philip the tetrarch, and by him was named Cæsarea in honor of the Roman emperor. It was called Cæsarea Philippi to distinguish it from the already existing Cæsarea, which was situated on the Mediterranean shore of Samaria, and which in later literature came to be known as Cæsarea Palestina. Cæsarea Philippi is believed to be identical with the ancient Baal Gad (Josh. 11:17) and Baal Hermon (Judg. 3:3). It was known as a place of idolatrous worship, and while under Greek sovereignty was called Paneas in recognition of the mythological deity Pan. See Josephus, Ant. xviii, 2:1; this designation persists in the present Arabic name of the place, Banias.

7. **Simon Peter and the "Rock" of Revelation.**—Simon the son of Jonas, on the occasion of his first recorded interview with Jesus had received from the Lord's lips the distinguishing name-title "Peter," or in the Aramaic tongue "Cephas," the English equivalent of which is "a rock" or "a stone" (John 1:42; see also page 140 herein). The name was confirmed upon the apostle on the occasion now under consideration (Matt. 16:18). Jesus said to him "thou art Peter," adding, "and upon this rock I will build my church." In the course of the general apostasy subsequent to the ancient apostolic ministry, the Bishop of Rome laid claim to supreme authority as the alleged lineal successor to Peter; and an erroneous doctrine gained currency to the effect that Peter was the "rock" upon which the Church of Christ was founded. Detailed consideration of this inconsistent and infamous claim cannot be undertaken here; it is sufficient to say that a church founded or dependent upon Peter or any other man would be Peter's or the other man's church, and not the Church of Jesus Christ. (See *The Great Apostasy*, chap 9; also B. of M., 3 Nephi 27:1-8; also chapter 40 herein). That upon Peter rested the responsibility of presidency in the ministry, after the ascension of the resurrected Christ, is not questioned; but that he was, even typically, the foundation upon which the Church was built, is at once unscriptural and untrue. The Church of Jesus Christ must authoritatively bear His name, and be guided by revelation, direct and continuous, as the conditions of its building require. Revelation from God to His servants invested with the Holy Priesthood through authorized ordination as was Peter, is the impregnable "rock" upon which the Church is built. (See *Articles of Faith*, xvi,—"Revelation.")

8. **Christ's Rebuke to Peter.**—In addressing Peter as "Satan," Jesus was obviously using a forceful figure of speech, and

not a literal designation; for Satan is a distinct personage, Lucifer, that fallen, unembodied son of the morning (see page 7); and certainly Peter was not he. In his remonstrance or "rebuke" addressed to Jesus, Peter was really counseling what Satan had before attempted to induce Christ to do, or tempting, as Satan himself had tempted. The command, "Get thee behind me, Satan," as directed to Peter, is rendered in English by some authorities "Get thee behind me, tempter." The essential meaning attached to both Hebrew and Greek originals for our word "Satan" is that of an adversary, or "one who places himself in another's way and thus opposes him." (Zenos.) The expression "Thou art an offense unto me" is admittedly a less literal translation than "Thou art a stumbling-block unto me." The man whom Jesus had addressed as Peter—"the rock," was now likened to a stone in the path, over which the unwary might stumble.

9. **Some to Live Until Christ Returns.**—The Savior's declaration to the apostles and others in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom," (Matt. 16:28; compare Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27), has occasioned great and diverse comment. The event referred to, that of the Son of Man coming in the glory of His Father attended by the angels, is yet future. At least a partial fulfilment of the prediction is presented in the prolongation of the life of John the apostle, who was there present, and who yet lives in the flesh according to his desire (John 21:20-24; see further B. of M., 3 Nephi 28:1-6; Doc. and Cov. Sec. 7).

10. **"Thou Art the Christ."**—Peter's solemn and soulful confession of Jesus as the Christ is worded differently by each of the three synoptists. To many the most expressive version is that of Luke: "The Christ of God." On earlier occasions, some or all of the Twelve had acknowledged Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, e. g. following the miracle of walking upon the sea (Matt. 14:33), and again, after the crucial sermon at Capernaum (John 6:69); but it is evident that Peter's upwelling and reverential confession in answer to the Lord's question "But whom say ye that I am?" had a significance, greater in assurance and more exalted in kind, than had any prior expression of his conception concerning his Lord. Yet even the conviction given through direct revelation (Matt. 16:17) did not at the time comprise a comprehensive knowledge of the Savior's mission. Indeed, a fulness of understanding and assurance came to the apostles after the Lord's resurrection (compare Romans 1:4). Nevertheless, Peter's testimony in the land of Cæsarea Philippi evidences a very exalted attainment. At that stage of the Savior's ministry, the public proclamation of His divine status would have been as the casting of pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6); therefore the Lord instructed the apostles that at that time "they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ."

CHAPTER 23.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Of the week following the events last considered, no record is found in the Gospels. We may safely assume that the time was devoted, in part at least, to the further instruction of the Twelve respecting the rapidly approaching consummation of the Savior's mission on earth, the awful circumstances of which the apostles were loath to believe possible. When the week had passed^a Jesus took Peter, James, and John^b and with them ascended a high mountain, where they would be reasonably safe from human intrusion.^c There the three apostles witnessed a heavenly manifestation, which stands without parallel in history; in our Bible captions it is known as the Transfiguration of Christ.^d

One purpose of the Lord's retirement was that of prayer, and a transcendent investiture of glory came upon Him as He prayed. The apostles had fallen asleep, but were awakened by the surpassing splendor of the scene, and gazed with reverent awe upon their glorified Lord. "The fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening." His garments, though made of earth-woven fabric, "became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them;" "and his face did shine as the sun." Thus was Jesus transfigured before the three privileged witnesses.

With Him were two other personages, who also were in a state of glorified radiance, and who conversed with the Lord. These, as the apostles learned, by means not stated

^a Note 1, end of chapter.

^b Note 2, end of chapter.

^c Note 3, end of chapter.

^d Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36.

though probably as gathered from the conversation in progress, were Moses and Elias, or more literally to us, Elijah; and the subject of their conference with Christ was "his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." As the prophet visitants were about to depart, "Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said." Undoubtedly Peter and his fellow apostles were bewildered, "sore afraid" indeed; and this condition may explain the suggestion respecting the three tabernacles. "He wist not what to say;" yet, though his remark appears confused and obscure, it becomes somewhat plainer when we remember that, at the annual feast of Tabernacles, it was customary to erect a little bower, or booth of wattled boughs, for each individual worshiper, into which he might retire for devotion. So far as there was a purpose in Peter's proposition, it seems to have been that of delaying the departure of the visitants.

The sublime and awful solemnity of the occasion had not yet reached its climax. Even as Peter spake, "behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." It was Elohim,^e the Eternal Father, who spake; and at the sound of that voice of supreme Majesty, the apostles fell prostrate. Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Arise, and be not afraid." When they looked they saw that again they were alone with Him.

The impression made upon the three apostles by this manifestation was one never to be forgotten; but they were expressly charged to speak of it to no man until after the Savior had risen from the dead. They were puzzled as to the significance of the Lord's reference to His prospective rising from the dead. They had heard with great sorrow, and reluctantly they were being brought to understand it to

be an awful certainty, that their beloved Master was to "suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed."^f Such had been declared to them before, in language devoid of ambiguity and admitting of no figurative construction; and with equal plainness they had been told that Jesus would rise again; but of this latter eventuality they had but dim comprehension. The present reiteration of these teachings seems to have left the three with no clearer understanding of their Lord's resurrection from the dead than they had before. They seem to have had no definite conception as to what was meant by a resurrection; "And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean."^g

The comprehensiveness of the Lord's injunction, that until after His rising from the dead they tell no man of their experiences on the mount, prohibited them from informing even their fellows of the Twelve. Later, after the Lord had ascended to His glory, Peter testified to the Church of the wondrous experience, in this forceful way: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."^h And John, reverently confessing before the world the divinity of the Word, the Son of God who had been made flesh to dwell among men, solemnly affirmed: "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."ⁱ

^f Mark 8:31. Note 6, end of chapter.

^g Mark 9:10.

^h 2 Peter 1:16-18.

ⁱ John 1:14.

The divine purpose as shown forth in the Transfiguration may be as incomprehensible to the human mind as is a full conception of the attendant splendor from verbal description; some features of the results achieved are apparent, however. Unto Christ the manifestation was strengthening and encouraging. The prospect of the experiences immediately ahead must naturally have been depressing and disheartening in the extreme. In faithfully treading the path of His life's work, He had reached the verge of the valley of the shadow of death; and the human part of His nature called for refreshing. As angels had been sent to minister unto Him after the trying scenes of the forty days' fast and the direct temptation of Satan,^j and as, in the agonizing hour of His bloody sweat, He was to be sustained anew by angelic ministry,^k so at this critical and crucial period, the beginning of the end, visitants from the unseen world came to comfort and support Him. What of actual communication passed in the conference of Jesus with Moses and Elijah is not of full record in the New Testament Gospels.

The voice of His Father, to whom He was the Firstborn in the spirit-world, and the Only Begotten in the flesh, was of supreme assurance; yet that voice had been addressed to the three apostles rather than to Jesus, who had already received the Father's acknowledgment and attestation on the occasion of His baptism. The fullest version of the Father's words to Peter, James, and John is that recorded by Matthew: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Aside from the proclamation of the Son's divine nature, the Father's words were otherwise decisive and portentous. Moses, the promulgator of the law, and Elijah the representative of the prophets and especially distinguished among them as the one who had not died,^l had been seen ministering unto Jesus and subservient to Him.

^j Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13.

^k Luke 22:43; compare John 12:27-28.

^l 2 Kings 2:11.

The fulfilment of the law and the superseding of the prophets by the Messiah was attested in the command—Hear ye *Him*. A new dispensation had been established, that of the gospel, for which the law and the prophets had been but preparatory. The apostles were to be guided neither by Moses nor Elijah, but by *Him*, their Lord, Jesus the Christ.

The three selected apostles, “the Man of Rock and the Sons of Thunder” had seen the Lord in glory; and they marveled that such a thing could be at that time, since as they had interpreted the scriptures, it had been predicted that Elijah should precede the Messiah’s triumphal advent. As they wended their way down the mountain-side, they asked the Master:^m “Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?” Jesus confirmed the prophecy that Elias should first come, that is, before the Lord’s advent in glory, which event they had in mind; “But,” He added, “I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.” That John the Baptist would officiate “in the spirit and power of Elias,” as the forerunner of the Christ, had been announced by the angel Gabriel to Zacharias,ⁿ before the Baptist’s birth; and that John was *that* particular Elias had been shown by Jesus in His memorable tribute to the Baptist’s fidelity and greatness. That His words would not be generally accepted with understanding is evidenced by the context; Jesus, on that occasion, had said: “And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.”^o

It is not possible that Jesus could have meant that John was the same individual as Elijah; nor could the people have so understood His words, since the false doctrine of trans-

^m Matt. 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13.

ⁿ Luke 1:17; pages 77 and 257 herein.

^o Matt. 11:14.

migration or reincarnation of spirits was repudiated by the Jews.^p The seeming difficulty is removed when we consider that, as the name appears in the New Testament, "Elias" is used for "Elijah,"^q with no attempt at distinction between Elijah the Tishbite, and any other person known as Elias. Gabriel's declaration that the then unborn John should manifest "the spirit and power of Elias" indicates that "Elias" is a title of office; every restorer, forerunner, or one sent of God to prepare the way for greater developments in the gospel plan, is an Elias. The appellative "Elias" is in fact both a personal name and a title.

In the present dispensation both the ancient Elias, who belonged to the Abrahamic dispensation and in the spirit of whose office many have officiated in different periods, and also the prophet Elijah, have appeared in person and have conferred their particular and separate authority upon latter-day bearers of the Holy Priesthood, and the keys of the powers exercised by them while on earth are today inherent in the restored Church of Jesus Christ. The authority of Elias is inferior to that of Elijah, the first being a function of the Lesser or Aaronic order of Priesthood, while the latter belongs to the Higher or Melchizedek Priesthood. Malachi's prediction, that before "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" Elijah the prophet would be sent to earth to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers,"^r did not reach fulfilment in the mission of John the Baptist, nor in that of any other "Elias";^s its complete realization was inaugurated on the third day of April, 1836, when Elijah appeared in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, and committed to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the keys of the authority theretofore vested in himself. "The great and dreadful day of the Lord" was

^p Edersheim, "Life and Times of Jesus," vol. ii, p. 79.

^q Note 4, end of chapter.

^r Mal. 4:5, 6; see page 149 herein.

^s Note 5, end of chapter.

not the meridian of time; that awful though blessed period of consummation is yet future, but "near, even at the doors."^t

NOTES TO CHAPTER 23.

1. Interval Between Time of Peter's Confession and that of the Transfiguration.—Both Matthew (17:1) and Mark (9:2) state that the Transfiguration occurred "after six days" following the time of Peter's great confession that Jesus was the Christ; while Luke (9:28) notes an interval of "about an eight days." It is probable that the six-day period was meant to be exclusive of the day on which the earlier events had occurred and of that on which Jesus and the three apostles retired to the mountain; and that Luke's "about an eight days" was made to include these two days. There is here no ground for a claim of discrepancy.

2. Peter, James, and John who were selected from among the Twelve as the only earthly witnesses of the transfiguration of Christ, had been similarly chosen as witnesses of a special manifestation, that of the raising of the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51); and, later, the same three were the sole witnesses of our Lord's night agony in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37; Mark 14:33).

3. Place of the Transfiguration.—The mountain on which the Transfiguration occurred is neither named nor otherwise indicated by the Gospel-writers in such a way as to admit of its positive identification. Mount Tabor, in Galilee, has long been held by tradition as the site, and in the sixth century three churches were erected on its plateau-like summit, possibly in commemoration of Peter's desire to make three tabernacles or booths, one each for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Later a monastery was built there. Nevertheless, Mt. Tabor is now rejected by investigators, and Mt. Hermon is generally regarded as the place. Hermon stands near the northerly limits of Palestine, just beyond Cæsarea Philippi, where Jesus is known to have been a week before the Transfiguration. Mark (9:30) distinctly tells us that after His descent from the mount, Jesus and the apostles departed and went through Galilee. Weight of evidence is in favor of Hermon as the Mount of Transfiguration, though nothing that may be called decisive is known in the matter.

4. The Names "Elias" and "Elijah."—The following statement which appears in Smith's *Bible Dictionary* is supported by authorities in general: "'Elias'" is "the Greek and Latin form of 'Elijah' given in the Authorized Version of the Apocrypha and New Testament."

5. "The Spirit and Power of Elias."—That John the Baptist, in his capacity as a restorer, a forerunner, or as one sent to prepare the way for a work greater than his own, did officiate as an "Elias" is attested by both ancient and latter-day scripture. Through him water baptism for the remission of sins was

^t Doc. and Cov. 110:13-16. See chapter 41, lv rein.

preached and administered, and the higher baptism, that of the Spirit, was made possible. True to his mission, he has come in the last dispensation, and has restored by ordination the Priesthood of Aaron, which has authority to baptize. He thus prepared the way for the vicarious labor of baptism for the dead, the authority for which was restored by Elijah, (see page 149 herein), and which is preeminently the work by which the children and the fathers shall be united in an eternal bond.

On the 10th of March, 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith gave the following exposition of the power of Elias as compared with higher authority: "The spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way, and the spirit and power of Elijah is to come after, holding the keys of power, building the temple to the cap-stone, placing the seals of the Melchizedek Priesthood upon the house of Israel, and making all things ready; then Messiah comes to His temple, which is last of all.

"Messiah is above the spirit and power of Elijah, for He made the world, and was that spiritual rock unto Moses in the wilderness. Elijah was to come and prepare the way and build up the kingdom before the coming of the great day of the Lord, although the spirit of Elias might begin it."—*Hist. of the Church.* under date named.

6. Mention of the Lord's Approaching "Decease."—Of the three synoptists, Luke alone makes even brief mention of the matter upon which Moses and Elijah conversed with the Lord at the Transfiguration. The record states that the visitants, who appeared in glory, "spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31). It is significant that the *decease*, which the Lord should *accomplish*, not the *death* that He should *suffer* or *die*, was the subject of that exalted communion. The Greek word of which "decease" appears as the English equivalent in many of the MSS. of the Gospels, is one connoting "exodus" or "departure," and the word occurring in other early versions signifies "glory." So also the Greek original of "accomplish," in the account of the Transfiguration, connotes the successful filling out or completion of a specific undertaking, and not distinctively the act of dying. Both the letter of the record and the spirit in which the recorder wrote indicate that Moses and Elijah conversed with their Lord on the glorious consummation of His mission in mortality—a consummation recognized in the law (personified in Moses) and the prophets (represented by Elijah)—and an event of supreme import, determining the fulfilment of both the law and the prophets, and the glorious inauguration of a new and higher order as part of the divine plan. The *decease* that the Savior was then so soon to *accomplish* was the voluntary surrender of His life in fulfilment of a purpose at once exalted and foreordained, not a *death* by which He would passively *die* through conditions beyond His control. (See pp. 418, and 662).

CHAPTER 24.

FROM SUNSHINE TO SHADOW.

Our Lord's descent from the holy heights^a of the Mount of Transfiguration was more than a physical return from greater to lesser altitudes; it was a passing from sunshine into shadow, from the effulgent glory of heaven to the mists of worldly passions and human unbelief; it was the beginning of His rapid descent into the valley of humiliation. From lofty converse with divinely-appointed ministers, from supreme communion with His Father and God, Jesus came down to a scene of disheartening confusion and a spectacle of demonized dominion before which even His apostles stood in impotent despair. To His sensitive and sinless soul the contrast must have brought superhuman anguish; even to us who read the brief account thereof it is appalling.

HEALING OF YOUTHFUL DEMONIAC.

Jesus and the three apostles returned from the mount on the morrow following the Transfiguration;^b this fact suggests the assumption that the glorious manifestation had occurred during the night. At or near the base of the mountain the party found the other apostles, and with them a multitude of people, including some scribes or rabbis.^c There was evidence of disputation and disturbance amongst the crowd; and plainly the apostles were on the defensive. At the unexpected approach of Jesus many of the people ran to meet Him with respectful salutations. Of the contentious scribes He asked: "What question ye with them?" thus

^a Compare 2 Peter 1:18.

^b Luke 9:37.

^c Matt. 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-42.

assuming the burden of the dispute, whatever it might be, and so relieving the distressed disciples from further active participation. The scribes remained silent; their courage had vanished when the Master appeared. A man, "one of the multitude," gave, though indirectly, the answer. "Master," said he, kneeling at the feet of Christ, "I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not."

The disciples' failure to heal the stricken youth had evidently brought upon them hostile criticism, taunts and ridicule from the unbelieving scribes; and their discomfiture must have been intensified by the thought that through them doubt had been cast upon the authority and power of their Lord. Pained in spirit at this—another instance of dearth of faith and consequent lack of power among His chosen and ordained servants—Jesus uttered an exclamation of intense sorrow: "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" These words, in which there is evident reproof, however mild and pitying it may be, were addressed primarily to the apostles; whether exclusively so or to them and others is of minor importance. As Jesus directed, the afflicted lad was brought nearer; and the tormenting demon, finding himself in the Master's presence, threw his youthful victim into a terrible paroxysm, so that the boy fell to the ground and wallowed in convulsions, the while frothing and foaming at the mouth. With calm deliberation, which contrasted strongly with the eager impatience of the distracted parent, Jesus inquired as to when the malady had first befallen the lad. "Of a child," answered the father, adding, "And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him." With pathetic eagerness he implored, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us." The man spoke of

his son's affliction as though shared by himself. "Help us," was his prayer.

To this qualifying expression "If thou canst do anything," which implied a measure of uncertainty as to the ability of the Master to grant what he asked, and this perhaps as in part a result of the failure of the apostles, Jesus replied: "If thou canst believe"; and added, "all things are possible to him that believeth." The man's understanding was enlightened; up to that moment he had thought that all depended upon Jesus; he now saw that the issue rested largely with himself. It is noteworthy that the Lord specified belief rather than faith as the condition essential to the case. The man was evidently trustful, and assuredly fervent in his hope that Jesus could help; but it is doubtful that he knew what faith really meant. He was receptive and eagerly teachable, however, and the Lord strengthened his feeble and uncertain belief. The encouraging explanation of the real need stimulated him to a more abounding trust. Weeping in an agony of hope he cried out: "Lord, I believe;" and then, realizing the darkness of error from which he was just beginning to emerge, he added penitently "help thou mine unbelief."^d

Looking compassionately upon the writhing sufferer at His feet, Jesus rebuked the demon, thus: "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose;" and as Luke adds, "and delivered him again to his father." The permanency of the cure was assured by the express command that the evil spirit enter no more into the lad;^e it was no relief from that present attack alone; the healing was permanent.

^d Note 1, end of chapter.

^e Compare Matt. 12:40-45.

The people were amazed at the power of God manifested in the miracle; and the apostles who had tried and failed to subdue the evil spirit were disturbed. While on their mission, though away from their Master's helpful presence, they had successfully rebuked and cast out evil spirits as they had received special power and commission to do;^f but now, during His absence of a day they had found themselves unable. When they had retired to the house, they asked of Jesus, "Why could not we cast him out?" The reply was: "Because of your unbelief;" and in further explanation the Lord said, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."^g

Hereby we learn that the achievements possible to faith are limited or conditioned by the genuineness, the purity, the unmixed quality of that faith. "O ye of little faith;" "Where is your faith?" and "Wherefore didst thou doubt?"^h are forms of admonitory reproof that had been repeatedly addressed to the apostles by the Lord. The possibilities of faith were now thus further affirmed: "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."ⁱ The comparison between effective faith and a grain of mustard seed is one of quality rather than of quantity; it connotes living, virile faith, like unto the seed, however small, from which a great plant may spring,^j in contrast with a lifeless, artificial imitation, however prominent or demonstrative.

THE LORD'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION AGAIN PREDICTED.^k

From the locality whereat the last miracle was wrought, Jesus departed with the Twelve, and passed through Galilee

^f Mark 6:12, 13; compare verse 7; also 3:15; Matt. 10:1.

^g Note 2, end of chapter.

^h Matt. 14:31; 16:8; Luke 8:25.

ⁱ Matt. 17:20; compare 21:21; Mark 11:23; Luke 17:6; see also Note 3, end of chapter.

^j Compare Parable of the Mustard Seed, page 290.

^k Matt. 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:44, 45.

toward Capernaum. It is probable that they traveled by the less frequented roads, as He desired that His return should not be publicly known. He had gone into comparative retirement for a season, primarily it seems in quest of opportunity to more thoroughly instruct the apostles in their preparation for the work, which within a few months they would be left to carry on without His bodily companionship. They had solemnly testified that they knew Him to be the Christ; to them therefore He could impart much that the people in general were wholly unprepared to receive. The particular theme of His special and advanced instruction to the Twelve was that of His approaching death and resurrection; and this was dwelt upon again and again, for they were slow or unwilling to comprehend.

"Let these sayings sink down into your ears" was His forceful prelude on this occasion, in Galilee. Then followed the reiterated prediction, spoken in part in the present tense as though already begun in fulfilment: "The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day." We read with some surprize that the apostles still failed to understand. Luke's comment is: "But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying." The thought of what the Lord's words might mean, even in its faintest outline, was terrifying to those devoted men; and their failure to comprehend was in part due to the fact that the human mind is loath to search deeply into anything it desires not to believe.

THE TRIBUTE MONEY—SUPPLIED BY A MIRACLE.¹

Jesus and His followers were again in Capernaum. There Peter was approached by a collector of the temple tax, who

¹ Matt. 17:24-27.

asked: "Doth not your Master pay tribute?"^m Peter answered "Yes." It is interesting to find that the inquiry was made of Peter and not directly of Jesus; this circumstance may be indicative of the respect in which the Lord was held by the people at large, and may suggest the possibility of doubt in the collector's mind as to whether Jesus was amenable to the tax, since priests and rabbis generally claimed exemption.

The annual capitation tax here referred to amounted to half a shekel or a didrachm, corresponding to about thirty-three cents in our money; and this had been required of every male adult in Israel since the days of the exodus; though, during the period of captivity the requirement had been modified.ⁿ This tribute, as prescribed through Moses, was originally known as "atonement money," and its payment was in the nature of a sacrifice to accompany supplication for ransom from the effects of individual sin. At the time of Christ the annual contribution was usually collected between early March and the Passover. If Jesus was subject to this tax, He was at this time several weeks in arrears.

The conversation between Peter and the tax-collector had occurred outside the house. When Peter entered, and was about to inform the Master concerning the interview, Jesus forestalled him, saying: "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free."

Peter must have seen the inconsistency of expecting Jesus, the acknowledged Messiah, to pay atonement money, or a tax for temple maintenance, inasmuch as the temple was the House of God, and Jesus was the Son of God, and particularly since even earthly princes were exempted from

^m Note 4, end of chapter.

ⁿ Exo. 30:13; 38:26. Page 171.

capitation dues. Peter's embarrassment over his inconsiderate boldness, in pledging payment for his Master without first consulting Him, was relieved however by Jesus, who said: "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

The money was to be paid, not because it could be rightfully demanded of Jesus, but lest non-payment give offense and furnish to His opponents further excuse for complaint. The "piece of money," which Jesus said Peter would find in the mouth of the first fish that took his bait, is more correctly designated by the literal translation "stater,"^o indicating a silver coin equivalent to a shekel, or two didrachms, and therefore the exact amount of the tax for two persons. "That take, and give unto them for me and thee" said Jesus. It is notable that He did not say "for us." In His associations with men, even with the Twelve, who of all were nearest and dearest to Him, our Lord always maintained His separate and unique status, in every instance making the fact apparent that He was essentially different from other men. This is illustrated by His expressions "My Father and your Father," "My God and your God,"^p instead of our Father and our God. He reverently acknowledged that He was the Son of God in a literal sense that did not apply to any other being.

While the circumstances of the finding of the stater in the fish are not detailed, and the actual accomplishment of the miracle is not positively recorded, we cannot doubt that what Jesus had promised was realized, as otherwise there would appear no reason for introducing the incident into the Gospel narrative. The miracle is without a parallel or even a remotely analogous instance. We need not assume that

^o See reading in revised version, and in margin of Oxford and Bagster Bibles.

^p John 20:17.

the stater was other than an ordinary coin that had fallen into the water, nor that it had been taken by the fish in any unusual way. Nevertheless, the knowledge that there was in the lake a fish having a coin in its gullet, that the coin was of the denomination specified, and that that particular fish would rise, and be the first to rise to Peter's hook, is as incomprehensible to man's finite understanding as are the means by which any of Christ's miracles were wrought. The Lord Jesus held and holds dominion over the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, for by His word and power were they made.

The Lord's purpose in so miraculously supplying the money should be studiously considered. The assumption that superhuman power had to be invoked because of a supposed condition of extreme poverty on the part of Jesus and Peter is unwarranted. Even if Jesus and His companions had been actually penniless, Peter and his fellow fishermen could easily have cast their net, and, with ordinary success have obtained fish enough to sell for the needed amount. Moreover, we find no instance of a miracle wrought by the Lord for personal gain or relief of His own need, however pressing. It appears probable, that by the means employed for obtaining the money, Jesus intentionally emphasized His exceptional reasons for redeeming Peter's pledge that the tax would be paid. The Jews, who did not know Jesus as the Messiah, but only as a Teacher of superior ability and a Man of unusual power, might have taken offense had He refused to pay the tribute required of every Jew. On the other hand, to the apostles and particularly to Peter who had been the mouth-piece of all in the great confession, the payment of the tax in ordinary course and without explanation by Jesus might have appeared as an admission that He was subject to the temple, and therefore less than He had claimed and less than they had confessed Him to be. His catechization of Peter had clearly demonstrated that He maintained

His right as the King's Son, and yet would condescend to voluntarily give what could not be righteously demanded. Then, in conclusive demonstration of His exalted status, He provided the money by the utilization of knowledge such as no other man possessed.

AS A LITTLE CHILD.^q

On the way to Capernaum the apostles had questioned among themselves, as they supposed beyond the Master's hearing; questioning had led to argument, and argument to disputation. The matter about which they were so greatly concerned was as to who among them should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. The testimony they had received convinced them beyond all doubt, that Jesus was the long-awaited Christ, and this had been supplemented and confirmed by His unqualified acknowledgment of His Messianic dignity. With minds still tinctured by the traditional expectation of the Messiah as both spiritual Lord and temporal King, and remembering some of the Master's frequent references to His kingdom and the blessed state of those who belonged thereto, and furthermore realizing that His recent utterances indicated a near crisis or climax in His ministry, they surrendered themselves to the selfish contemplation of their prospective stations in the new kingdom, and the particular offices of trust, honor, and emolument each most desired. Who of them was to be prime minister; who would be chancellor, who the commander of the troops? Personal ambition had already engendered jealousy in their hearts.

When they were together with Jesus in the house at Capernaum, the subject was brought up again. Mark tells us that Jesus asked: "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" and that they answered not, be-

^q Matt. 18:1-11; Mark 9:33-37, 42; Luke 9:46-48.

cause, as may be inferred, they were ashamed. From Matthew's record it may be understood that the apostles submitted the question for the Master's decision. The apparent difference of circumstance is unimportant; both accounts are correct; Christ's question to them may have eventually brought out their questions to Him. Jesus, comprehending their thoughts and knowing their unenlightened state of mind on the matter that troubled them, gave them an illustrated lesson. Calling a little child, whom He lovingly took into His arm, He said: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." With this lesson we may profitably associate a later teaching, that little children are typical of the kingdom of heaven.^r

Even the apostles were in need of conversion;^s respecting the matter at issue their hearts were turned, partly at least, from God and His kingdom. They had to learn that genuine humility is an attribute essential to citizenship in the community of the blessed; and that the degree of humility conditions whatsoever there is akin to rank in the kingdom; for therein the humblest shall be greatest.

Christ would not have had His chosen representatives become childish; far from it, they had to be men of courage, fortitude, and force; but He would have them become childlike. The distinction is important. Those who belong to Christ must become like little children in obedience, truthful-

^r Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17.

^s Compare Luke 22:32.

ness, trustfulness, purity, humility, and faith. The child is an artless, natural, trusting believer; the childish one is careless, foolish, and neglectful. In contrasting these characteristics, note the counsel of Paul: "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."^t Children as such, and children as types of adults who are true believers, are closely associated in this lesson. Whosoever shall offend, that is cause to stumble or go astray, one such child of Christ, incurs guilt so great that it would have been better for him had he met death even by violence before he had so sinned.

Dwelling upon offenses, or causes of stumbling, the Lord continued: "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Then, repeating some of the precious truths embodied in His memorable Sermon on the Mount,^u He urged the overcoming of evil propensities whatever the sacrifice. As it is better that a man undergo surgical treatment though he lose thereby a hand, a foot, or an eye, than that his whole body be involved and his life forfeited, so is it commended that he cut off, tear away, or root out from his soul the passions of evil, which, if suffered to remain shall surely bring him under condemnation. In that state his conscience shall gnaw as an undying worm, and his remorse shall be as a fire that cannot be quenched. Every human soul shall be tested as by fire; and as the flesh of the altar sacrifices had to be seasoned with salt, as a type of preservation from corruption,^v so also the soul must receive the saving salt of the gospel; and that salt must be pure and potent, not a dirty mixture of inherited prejudice and unauthorized tradition that has lost whatever saltiness it may once have had. "Have salt in yourselves, and have

^t 1 Cor. 14:20; compare 13:11; Matt. 11:25; Psa. 131:2.

^u Page 234.

^v Mark 9:49,50; compare Lev. 2:13; Ezek. 43:24.

peace one with another," was the Lord's admonition to the disputing Twelve.^w

As applicable to children of tender years, and to child-like believers young and old, the Savior gave to the apostles this solemn warning and profound statement of fact: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The mission of the Christ was presented as that of saving those who are temporarily lost, and who, but for His aid would be lost forever. In elucidation of His meaning, the Teacher presented a parable which has found place among the literary treasures of the world.

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP.^x

"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

In this effective analogy the saving purpose of Christ's mission is made prominent. He is verily the Savior. The shepherd is portrayed as leaving the ninety and nine, pastured or folded in safety we cannot doubt, while he goes alone into the mountains to seek the one that has strayed. In finding and bringing back the wayward sheep, he has more joy than that of knowing the others are yet safe. In a later version of this splendid parable, as addressed to the murmuring Pharisees and scribes at Jerusalem, the Master said of the shepherd on his finding the lost sheep:

^w Mark 9:43-50; compare Matt. 18:8, 9. Page 232 herein.

^x Matt. 18:12-14; compare Luke 15:3-7 in which occurs a repetition of this impressive parable, as given on a later occasion to Pharisees and scribes at Jerusalem with a somewhat different application.

"And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."^y

Many have marveled that there should be greater rejoicing over the recovery of one stray sheep, or the saving of a soul that had been as one lost, than over the many who have not been in such jeopardy. In the safe-folded ninety and nine the shepherd had continued joy; but to him came a new accession of happiness, brighter and stronger because of his recent grief, when the lost was brought back to the fold. To this parable in connection with others of analogous import we shall recur in a later chapter.

"IN MY NAME."^z

In continuation of the lesson illustrated by the little child, Jesus said: "Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great." It may have been Christ's reference to deeds done in His name that prompted John to interject a remark at this point: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part." The young apostle had allowed his zeal for the Master's name to lead to intolerance. That the man who had attempted to do good in the name of Jesus was evidently sincere, and that his efforts were acceptable to

^y Luke 15:1-7. See further page 454 herein.

^z Luke 9:48-50; Mark 9:37-41.

the Lord we cannot doubt ; his act was essentially different from the unrighteous assumptions for which some others were afterward rebuked;^a he was certainly a believer in Christ, and may have been one of the class from which the Lord was soon to select and commission special ministers and the Seventy.^b In the state of divided opinion then existing among the people concerning Jesus, it was fair to say that all who were not opposed to Him were at least tentatively on His side. On other occasions He asserted that those who were not with Him were against Him.^c

MY BROTHER AND I.^d

The proper method of adjusting differences between brethren and the fundamental principles of Church discipline were made subjects of instruction to the Twelve. The first step is thus prescribed : "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." The rule of the rabbis was that the offender must make the first advance ; but Jesus taught that the injured one should not wait for his brother to come to him, but go himself, and seek to adjust the difficulty ; by so doing he might be the means of saving his brother's soul. If the offender proved to be obdurate, the brother who had suffered the trespass was to take two or three others with him, and again try to bring the transgressor to repentant acknowledgment of his offense ; such a course provided for witnesses, by whose presence later misrepresentation would be guarded against.

Extreme measures were to be adopted only after all gentler means had failed. Should the man persist in his obstinacy, the case was to be brought before the Church, and

^a Contrast the instance of the sons of Sceva, Acts 19:13-17.

^b Compare Luke 9:52; 10:1.

^c Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23.

^d Matt. 18:15-20; compare Luke 17:3, 4.

in the event of his neglect or refusal to heed the decision of the Church, he was to be deprived of fellowship, thereby becoming in his relationship to his former associates "as an heathen man and a publican." In such state of non-membership he would be a fit subject for missionary effort; but, until he became repentant and manifested willingness to make amends, he could claim no rights or privileges of communion in the Church. Continued association with the unrepentant sinner may involve the spread of his disaffection, and the contamination of others through his sin. Justice is not to be dethroned by Mercy. The revealed order of discipline in the restored Church is similar to that given to the apostles of old.^e

The authority of the Twelve to administer the affairs of Church government was attested by the Lord's confirming to them as a body the promise before addressed to Peter: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."^f Through unity of purpose and unreserved sincerity they would have power with God, as witness the Master's further assurance: "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Peter here broke in with a question: "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" He would fain have some definite limit set, and he probably considered the tentative suggestion of seven times as a very liberal measure, inasmuch as the rabbis prescribed a triple forgiveness only.^g He may have chosen seven as the next number above three having a special Phari-

^e Compare Doc. and Cov. 20:80; 42:88-93; 98:39-48.

^f Matt. 18:18; compare 16:19, and John 20:23.

^g They based this limitation on Amos 1:3 and Job 33:29. In the latter passage, as it appears in the authorized version, the word "oftentimes" is an erroneous rendering of the original, which really signified "twice and thrice."

saical significance. The Savior's answer was enlightening: "Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." This reply must have meant to Peter as it means to us, that to forgiveness man may set no bounds; the forgiveness, however, must be merited by the recipient.^h The instruction was made memorable by the following story:

PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT.

"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."ⁱ

Ten thousand talents are specified as expressive of a sum

^h Compare Luke 17:3, 4.

ⁱ Matt. 18:23-35.

so great as to put the debtor beyond all reasonable possibility of paying. We may regard the man as a trusted official, one of the king's ministers, who had been charged with the custody of the royal revenues, or one of the chief treasurers of taxes ; that he is called a servant introduces no inconsistency, as in an absolute monarchy all but the sovereign are subjects and servants. The selling of the debtor's wife and children and all that he had would not have been in violation of the law in the supposed case, which implies the legal recognition of slavery.^j The man was in arrears for debt. He did not come before his lord voluntarily but had to be brought. So in the affairs of our individual lives periodical reckonings are inevitable ; and while some debtors report of their own accord, others have to be cited to appear. The messengers who serve the summons may be adversity, illness, the approach of death ; but, whatever, whoever they are, they enforce a rendering of our accounts.

The contrast between ten thousand talents and a hundred pence is enormous.^k In his fellowservant's plea for time in which to pay the hundred pence, the greater debtor should have been reminded of the dire straits from which he had just been relieved ; the words, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all," were identical with those of his own prayer to the king. The base ingratitude of the unmerciful servant justified the king in revoking the pardon once granted. The man came under condemnation, not primarily for defalcation and debt, but for lack of mercy after having received of mercy so abundantly. He, as an unjust plaintiff, had invoked the law ; as a convicted transgressor he was to be dealt with according to the law. Mercy is for the merciful. As a heavenly jewel it is to be received with thankfulness and used with sanctity, not to be cast into the mire of undeservedness. Justice may demand retribution and pun-

^j Compare 2 Kings 4:1; Lev. 25:39.

^k Note 5, end of chapter.

ishment: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."^l The conditions under which we may confidently implore pardon are set forth in the form of prayer prescribed by the Lord: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."^m

NOTES TO CHAPTER 24.

1. Faith in Behalf of Others.—The supplication of the agonized father for the benefit of his sorely afflicted son—"Have compassion on us, and help us" (Mark 9:22)—shows that he made the boy's case his own. In this we are reminded of the Canaanite woman who implored Jesus to have mercy on her, though her daughter was the afflicted one (Matt. 15:22; page 354 herein). In these cases, faith was exercised in behalf of the sufferers by others; and the same is true of the centurion who pleaded for his servant and whose faith was specially commended by Jesus (Matt. 8:5-10; page 249 herein); of Jairus whose daughter lay dead (Luke 8:41, 42, 49, 50; page 313 herein), and of many who brought their helpless kindred or friends to Christ and pleaded for them. As heretofore shown, faith to be healed is as truly a gift of God as is faith to heal (page 318); and, as the instances cited prove, faith may be exercised with effect in behalf of others. In connection with the ordinance of administering to the afflicted, by anointing with oil and the laying on of hands, as authoritatively established in the restored Church of Jesus Christ, the elders officiating should encourage the faith of all believers present, that such be exerted in behalf of the sufferer. In the case of infants and of persons who are unconscious, it is plainly useless to look for active manifestation of faith on their part, and the supporting faith of kindred and friends is all the more requisite.

2. Power Developed by Prayer and Fasting.—The Savior's statement concerning the evil spirit that the apostles were unable to subdue—"Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting"—indicates gradation in the malignity and evil power of demons, and gradation also in the results of varying degrees of faith. The apostles who failed on the occasion referred to had been able to cast out demons at other times. Fasting, when practised in prudence, and genuine prayer are conducive to the development of faith with its accompanying power for good. Individual application of this principle may be made with profit. Have you some besetting weakness, some sinful indulgence that you have vainly tried to overcome? Like the malignant demon that Christ rebuked in the boy, your sin may be of a kind that goeth out only through prayer and fasting.

3. Nothing Impossible to Faith.—Many people have ques-

^l Matt. 7:1; see also verse 6.

^m Matt. 6:12; compare Luke 11:4; B. of M., 3 Nephi 13:11; page 240.

tioned the literal truth of the Lord's declaration that by faith mountains may be removed from their place. Plainly there would have to be a purpose in harmony with the divine mind and plan, in order that faith could be exerted at all in such an undertaking. Neither such a miracle nor any other is possible as a gratification of the yearning for curiosity, nor for display, nor for personal gain or selfish satisfaction. Christ wrought no miracle with any such motive; He persistently refused to show signs to mere sign-seekers. But to deny the possibility of a mountain being removed through faith, under conditions that would render such removal acceptable to God, is to deny the word of God, both as to this specific possibility, and as to the general assurance that "nothing shall be impossible" to him who hath faith adequate to the end desired. It is worthy of note, however, that the Jews in the days of Christ and since often spoke of removing mountains as a figurative expression for the overcoming of difficulties. According to Lightfoot and other authorities a man able to solve intricate problems, or of particular power in argument or acumen in judgment, was referred to as a "rooter up of mountains."

- 4. **The Temple Tribute.**—That the tribute money referred to in the text was a Jewish contribution to the temple and not a tax levied by the Roman government, is apparent from the specification of the "didrachma," which in the authorized version is translated "tribute." This coin was equivalent to the half shekel, reckoned "after the shekel of the sanctuary," which was the fixed amount to be paid annually by every male "from twenty years old and above," with the provision that "the rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less" (Exo. 30:13-15). A tax levied by the political powers would not be designated as the didrachma. Moreover, had the collector who approached Peter been one of the official publicans, he probably would have demanded the tax instead of inquiring as to whether or not the Master ~~was~~ to be counted among the contributors.

Among the many humiliations to which the Jews were subjected in later years, after the destruction of the temple, was the compulsory payment of what had been their temple tribute, to the Romans, who decreed it as a revenue to the pagan temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Of the emperor Vespasian, Josephus (Wars of the Jews, vii, 6:6) says: That he also laid a tribute wheresoever they were, and enjoined every one of them to bring two drachmæ every year into the capitol, as they used to pay the same to the temple at Jerusalem.

- 5. **Talents and Pence.**—It is evident that by specifying ten thousand talents as the debt due the king, and a hundred pence as that owed by the fellow-servant, the Lord intended to present a case of great disparity and striking contrast. The actual amounts involved are of minor significance in the story. We are not told which variety of talent was meant; there were Attic talents, and both silver and gold talents of Hebrew reckoning; and each differed from the others in value. The Oxford marginal explanation is: "A talent is 750 ounces of silver, which

after five shillings the ounce is 187 pounds, ten shillings." This would be in American money over nine and a quarter millions of dollars as the sum of the ten thousand talents. The same authority gives as the value of the penny (Roman) sevenpence half-penny, or fifteen cents, making the second debt equivalent to about fifteen dollars. Comparison with talents mentioned elsewhere may be allowable. Trench says: "How vast a sum it was we can most vividly realize to ourselves by comparing it with other sums mentioned in Scripture. In the construction of the tabernacle, twenty-nine talents of gold were used (Exo. 38:24); David prepared for the temple three thousand talents of gold, and the princes five thousand (1 Chron. 29:4-7); the queen of Sheba presented to Solomon one hundred and twenty talents (1 Kings 10:10); the king of Assyria laid upon Hezekiah thirty talents of gold (2 Kings 18:14); and in the extreme impoverishment to which the land was brought at the last, one talent of gold was laid upon it, after the death of Josiah, by the king of Egypt (2 Chron. 36:3)." Farrar estimates the debt owed to the king as 1,250,000 times that owed by the lesser to the greater debtor.

6. An Assumed Approval of Slavery.—Some readers have assumed that they find in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant an implied approval of the institution of slavery. The greater debtor, who figures in the story, was to be sold, together with his wife and children and all that he had. A rational consideration of the story as a whole is likely to find at most, in the particular incident of the king's command that the debtor and his family be sold, that the system of buying and selling bondservants, serfs, or slaves, was legally recognized at the time. The purpose of the parable was not even remotely to endorse or condemn slavery or any other social institution. The Mosaic law is explicit in matters relating to bondservants. The "angel of the Lord" who brought to Hagar a message of encouragement and blessing respected the authority of her mistress (Gen. 16:8, 9). In the apostolic epoch, instruction was directed toward right living under the secular law, not rebellion against the system (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 6:1-3; 1 Peter 2:18). Recognition of established customs, institutions, and laws, and proper obedience thereto, do not necessarily imply individual approval. The gospel of Jesus Christ, which shall yet regenerate the world, is to prevail—not by revolutionary assaults upon existing governments, nor through anarchy and violence—but by the teaching of individual duty and by the spread of the spirit of love. When the love of God shall be given a place in the hearts of mankind, when men shall unselfishly love their neighbors, then social systems and governments shall be formed and operated to the securing of the greatest good to the greatest number. Until men open their hearts to the reception of the gospel of Jesus Christ, injustice and oppression, servitude and slavery, in some form or other, are sure to exist. Attempts to extirpate social conditions that spring from individual selfishness cannot be otherwise than futile so long as selfishness is left to thrive and propagate.

CHAPTER 25.

JESUS AGAIN IN JERUSALEM.

DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE.^a

Of our Lord's labors during His brief sojourn in Galilee following His return from the region of Cæsarea Philippi we have no record aside from that of His instructions to the apostles. His Galilean ministry, so far as the people in general were concerned, had practically ended with the discourse at Capernaum on His return thither after the miracles of feeding the five thousand and walking upon the sea. At Capernaum many of the disciples had turned away from the Master,^b and now, after another short visit, He prepared to leave the land in which so great a part of His public work had been accomplished.

It was autumn; about six months had passed since the return of the apostles from their missionary tour; and the Feast of Tabernacles was near at hand. Some of the kinsmen of Jesus came to Him, and proposed that He go to Jerusalem and take advantage of the opportunity offered by the great national festival, to declare Himself more openly than He had theretofore done. His brethren, as the visiting relatives are called, urged that He seek a broader and more prominent field than Galilee for the display of His powers, arguing that it was inconsistent for any man to keep himself in comparative obscurity when he wanted to be widely known. "Shew thyself to the world," said they. Whatever their motives may have been, these brethren of His did not advise more extended publicity through any zeal for His

^a John 7:1-10.

^b Page 343.

divine mission; indeed, we are expressly told that they did not believe in Him.^c Jesus replied to their presumptuous advice: "My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come." It was not their prerogative to direct His movements, not to say when He should do even what He intended to do eventually.^d He made it plain that between their status and His there was essential difference; they were of the world, which they loved as the world loved them; but the world hated Him because of His testimony.

This colloquy between Jesus and His brethren took place in Galilee. They soon started for Jerusalem leaving Him behind. He had not said that He would not go to the feast; but only "I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come." Some time after their departure He followed, traveling "not openly, but as it were in secret." Whether He went alone, or accompanied by any or all of the Twelve, we are not told.

AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.^e

The agitated state of the public mind respecting Jesus is shown by the interest manifest in Jerusalem as to the probability of His presence at the feast. His brethren, who probably were questioned, could give no definite information as to His coming. He was sought for in the crowds; there was much discussion and some disputation concerning Him. Many people expressed their conviction that He was a good man, while others contradicted on the claim that He was a deceiver. There was little open discussion, however, for the people were afraid of incurring the displeasure of the rulers.

^c John 7:5; compare Mark 3:21 in which "friends" is an inaccurate rendering for "kinsmen".

^d Compare Christ's answer to His mother, John 2:4; see also 7:30; 8:20.

^e John 7:11-53.

As originally established, the Feast of Tabernacles was a seven day festival, followed by a holy convocation on the eighth day. Each day was marked by special and in some respects distinctive services, all characterized by ceremonies of thanksgiving and praise.^f "Now about the midst of the feast," probably on the third or fourth day, "Jesus went up into the temple, and taught." The first part of His discourse is not recorded, but its scriptural soundness is intimated in the surprize of the Jewish teachers, who asked among themselves: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" He was no graduate of their schools; He had never sat at the feet of their rabbis; He had not been officially accredited by them nor licensed to teach. Whence came His wisdom, before which all their academic attainments were as nothing? Jesus answered their troubled queries, saying: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." His Teacher, greater even than Himself, was the Eternal Father, whose will He proclaimed. The test proposed to determine the truth of His doctrine was in every way fair, and withal simple; anyone who would earnestly seek to do the will of the Father should know of himself whether Jesus spoke truth or error.^g The Master proceeded to show that a man who speaks on his own authority alone seeks to aggrandize himself. Jesus did not so; He honored His Teacher, His Father, His God, not Himself; and therefore was He free from the taint of selfish pride or unrighteousness. Moses had given them the law, and yet, as Jesus affirmed, none of them kept the law.

Then, with startling abruptness, He challenged them with the question, "Why go ye about to kill me?" On many occasions had they held dark counsel with one another as to how

^f Note 1, end of chapter.

^g Note 2, end of chapter.

they could get Him into their power and put Him to death; but they thought that the murderous secret was hidden within their own circle. The people had heard the seducing assertions of the ruling classes, that Jesus was possessed by a demon, and that He wrought wonders through the power of Beelzebub; and in the spirit of this blasphemous slander, they cried out: "Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?"

Jesus knew that the two specifications of alleged guilt on which the rulers were striving most assiduously to convict Him in the popular mind, and so turn the people against Him, were those of Sabbath-breaking and blasphemy. On an earlier visit to Jerusalem He had healed an afflicted man on the Sabbath, and had utterly disconcerted the hypercritical accusers who even then had sought to compass His death.^h To this act of mercy and power Jesus now referred, saying: "I have done one work, and ye all marvel." Seemingly they were still of unsettled mind, in doubt as to accepting Him because of the miracle or denouncing Him because He had done it on the Sabbath. Then He showed the inconsistency of charging Him with Sabbath-desecration for such a merciful deed, when the law of Moses expressly allowed acts of mercy, and even required that the mandatory rite of circumcision should not be deferred because of the Sabbath. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" said He.

The masses were still divided in their estimate of Jesus, and were moreover puzzled over the indecision of the rulers. Some of the Jerusalem Jews knew of the plan to arrest Him, and if possible to bring Him to death, and the people queried why nothing was done when He was there teaching publicly within reach of the officials. They wondered whether the rulers had not at last come to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. The thought, however, was brushed aside when

^h John 5; see pages 206-208 herein.

they remembered that all knew whence He came ; He was a Galilean, and from Nazareth, whereas as they had been taught, however wrongly, the advent of the Christ was to be mysterious so that none would know whence He came. Strange it was, indeed, that men should reject Him because of a lack of mystery and miracle in His advent ; when, had they known the truth, they would have seen in His birth a miracle without precedent or parallel in the annals of time. Jesus directly answered their weak and faulty reasoning. Crying aloud within the temple courts, He assured them that while they knew whence He came as one of their number, yet they did not know that He had come from God, neither did they know God who had sent Him : "But," He added, "I know him : for I am from him, and he hath sent me." At this reiterated testimony of His divine origin, the Jews were the more enraged, and they determined anew to take Him by force ; nevertheless none laid hands upon him "because his hour was not yet come."

Many of the people believed in their hearts that He was of God, and ventured to ask among themselves whether Christ would do greater works than Jesus had done. The Pharisees and chief priests feared a possible demonstration in favor of Jesus, and forthwith sent officers to arrest Him and bring him before the Sanhedrin.ⁱ The presence of the temple police caused no interruption to the Master's discourse, though we may reasonably infer that He knew the purpose of their errand. He spoke on, saying that He would be with the people but a little while ; and that after He had returned to the Father, they would seek Him vainly, for where He would then be they could not come. This remark evoked more bitter discussion. Some of the Jews wondered whether He intended to leave the borders of the land and go among the Gentiles to teach them and the dispersed Israelites.

As part of the temple service incident to the feast, the people went in procession to the Pool of Siloam^j where a priest filled a golden ewer, which he then carried to the altar and there poured out the water to the accompaniment of trumpet blasts and the acclamations of the assembled hosts.^k According to authorities on Jewish customs, this feature was omitted on the closing day of the feast. On this last or "great day," which was marked by ceremonies of unusual solemnity and rejoicing, Jesus was again in the temple. It may have been with reference to the bringing of water from the pool, or to the omission of the ceremony from the ritualistic procedure of the great day, that Jesus cried aloud, His voice resounding through the courts and arcades of the temple: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."^l

John, the recorder, remarks parenthetically that this promise had reference to the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, which at that time had not been granted, nor was it to be until after the ascension of the risen Lord.^m

Again many of the people were so impressed that they declared Jesus could be none other than the Messiah; but others objected, saying that the Christ must come from Bethlehem of Judea and Jesus was known to have come from Galilee.ⁿ So there was further dissension; and though some wanted Him apprehended, not a man was found who would venture to lay hold on Him.

The police officers returned without their intended prisoner. To the angry demand of the chief priests and Pharisees as to why they had not brought Him, they acknowledged that they had been so affected by His teachings as to be

^j Note 3, end of chapter.

^k This was regarded as a literal fulfilment of Isa. 12:3.

^l John 7:37, 38; compare with the assurance respecting "living water" given to the Samaritan woman, 4:10-15.

^m John 7:39; compare 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:7; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:4.

ⁿ Note 4, end of chapter.

unable to make the arrest. "Never man spake like this man," they said. Their haughty masters were furious. "Are ye also deceived?" they demanded; and further, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" What was the opinion of the common people worth? They had never learned the law, and were therefore accursed and of no concern. Yet with all this show of proud disdain, the chief priests and Pharisees were afraid of the common people, and were again halted in their wicked course.

One voice of mild protest was heard in the assembly. Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, and the same who had come to Jesus by night to inquire into the new teaching,^o mustered courage enough to ask: "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" The answer was insulting. Maddened with bigotry and blood-thirsty fanaticism, some of his colleagues turned upon him with the savage demand: "Art thou also of Galilee?" meaning, Art thou also a disciple of this Galilean whom we hate? Nicodemus was curtly told to study the scriptures, and he would fail to find any prediction of a prophet arising in Galilee. The anger of these learned bigots had blinded them even to their own vaunted knowledge, for several of the ancient prophets were regarded as Galileans;^p if, however they had meant to refer only to that Prophet of whom Moses had spoken, the Messiah, they were correct, since all predictions pointed to Bethlehem in Judea as His birthplace. It is evident that Jesus was thought of as a native of Nazareth, and that the circumstances of His birth were not of public knowledge.

"GO, AND SIN NO MORE."^q

After the festivities were over, Jesus went to the temple one morning early; and as He sat, probably in the

^o John 3; page 158 herein.

^p According to many excellent authorities, Jonah, Nahum, and Hosea were all of Galilee; and it is further believed that Elijah also was of Galilean nativity.

^q John 8:1-11.

Court of the Women, which was the usual place of public resort, many gathered about Him and He proceeded to teach them as was His custom. His discourse was interrupted by the arrival of a party of scribes and Pharisees with a woman in charge, who, they said, was guilty of adultery. To Jesus they presented this statement and question: "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou?" The submitting of the case to Jesus was a prearranged snare, a deliberate attempt to find or make a cause for accusing Him. Though it was not unusual for Jewish officials to consult rabbis of recognized wisdom and experience when difficult cases were to be decided, the case in point involved no legal complications. The woman's guilt seems to have been unquestioned, though the witnesses required by the statutes are not mentioned as appearing unless the accusing scribes and Pharisees are to be so considered; the law was explicit, and the custom of the times in dealing with such offenders was well known. While it is true that the law of Moses had decreed death by stoning as the penalty for adultery, the infliction of the extreme punishment had lapsed long before the time of Christ. One may reasonably ask why the woman's partner in the crime was not brought for sentence, since the law so zealously cited by the officious accusers provided for the punishment of both parties to the offense.^r

The question of the scribes and Pharisees, "But what sayest thou?" may have intimated their expectation that Jesus would declare the law obsolete; perhaps they had heard of the Sermon on the Mount, in which many requirements in advance of the Mosaic code had been proclaimed.^s Had Jesus decided that the wretched woman ought to suffer death, her accusers might have said that he was defying the existing authorities; and possibly the charge of opposition

^r Deut. 22:22-27.

^s Matt. 5:21-48.

to the Roman government might have been formulated, since power to inflict the death penalty had been taken from all Jewish tribunals; and moreover, the crime with which this woman was charged was not a capital offense under Roman law. Had He said that the woman should go unpunished or suffer only minor infliction, the crafty Jews could have charged Him with disrespect for the law of Moses. To these scribes and Pharisees Jesus at first gave little heed. Stooping down He traced with His finger on the ground; but as He wrote they continued to question Him. Lifting Himself up He answered them, in a terse sentence that has become proverbial: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Such was the law; the accusers on whose testimony the death penalty was pronounced were to be the first to begin the work of execution.^t

Having spoken, Jesus again stooped and wrote upon the ground. The woman's accusers were "convicted by their own conscience"; shamed and in disgrace they slunk away, all of them from the eldest to the youngest. They knew themselves to be unfit to appear either as accusers or judges.^u What cowards doth conscience make! "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more."^v

The woman was repentant; she remained humbly awaiting the Master's decision, even after her accusers had gone. Jesus did not expressly condone; He declined to condemn; but He sent the sinner away with a solemn adjuration to a better life.^w

^t Deut. 17:6, 7; also 13:9.

^u Compare Rom. 2:1, 22; Matt. 7:1, 2; Luke 6:37; 2 Sam. 12:5-7.

^v John 8:10, 11; compare 5:14. Consider another instance of mercy granted through contrition Luke 7:36-50.

^w Note 5, end of chapter.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.^x

Sitting within the temple enclosure in the division known as the Treasury, which was connected with the Court of the Women,^y our Lord continued His teaching, saying: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."^z The great lamps set up in the court as a feature of the joyful celebration just ended gave point to our Lord's avowal of Himself as the Light of the World. It was another proclamation of His divinity as God and the Son of God. The Pharisees challenged His testimony, declaring it of no worth because He bore record of Himself. Jesus admitted that He testified of Himself, but affirmed nevertheless that what He said was true, for He knew whereof He spoke, whence He came and whither He would go, while they spoke in ignorance. They thought, talked, and judged after the ways of men and the frailties of the flesh; He was not sitting in judgment, but should He choose to judge, then His judgment would be just, for He was guided by the Father who sent Him. Their law required the testimony of two witnesses for the legal determination of any question of fact;^a and Jesus cited Himself and His Father as witnesses in support of His affirmation. His opponents then asked with contemptuous or sarcastic intent, "Where is thy Father?" The reply was in lofty tone; "Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also." Enraged at their own discomfiture, the Pharisees would have seized Him, but found themselves impotent. "No man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come."

^x John 8:12-20.

^y Note 6, end of chapter.

^z John 8:12; compare 1:4, 5, 9; 3:19; 9:5; 12:35, 36, 46. See also Doc. and Cov. 6:21; 10:58, 70; 11:11; 14:9; 84:45, 46; 88:6-13.

^a Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Numb. 35:30; Matt. 18:16.

THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.^b

Again addressing the mixed assemblage, which probably comprised Pharisees, scribes, rabbis, priests, Levites, and lay people, Jesus repeated His former assertion that soon He would leave them, and that whither He went they could not follow; and added the fateful assurance that they would seek Him in vain and would die in their sins. His solemn portent was treated with light concern if not contempt. Some of them asked querulously, "Will he kill himself?" the implication being that in such case they surely would not follow Him; for according to their dogma, Gehenna was the place of suicides, and they, being of the chosen people, were bound for heaven not hell. The Lord's dignified rejoinder was: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

This reiteration of His distinctive supremacy brought forth the challenging question, "Who art thou?" Jesus replied, "Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning." The many matters on which He might have judged them He refrained from mentioning, but testified anew of the Father, saying: "He that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him." Explicit as His earlier explanations had been, the Jews in their gross prejudice "understood not that he spake to them of the Father." To His Father Jesus ascribed all honor and glory, and repeatedly declared Himself as sent to do the Father's will. "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the

^b John 8:21-59.

Father hath not left me alone ; for I do always those things that please him."

The evident earnestness and profound conviction with which Jesus spoke caused many of His hearers to believe on Him ; and these He addressed with the promise that if they continued in that belief, and shaped their lives according to His word, they should be His disciples indeed. A further promise followed : "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." At these words, so rich in blessing, so full of comfort for the believing soul, the people were stirred to angry demonstrations ; their Jewish temper was immediately ablaze. To promise them freedom was to imply that they were not already free. "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man : how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free ?" In their unbridled fanaticism they had forgotten the bondage of Egypt, the captivity of Babylon, and were oblivious of their existing state of vassalage to Rome. To say that Israel had never been in bondage was not only to convict themselves of falsehood but to stultify themselves wretchedly.

Jesus made it clear that He had not referred to freedom in its physical or political sense alone, though to this conception their false disavowal had been directed ; the liberty He proclaimed was spiritual liberty ; the grievous bondage from which He would deliver them was the servitude of sin. To their vaunted boast that they were free men, not slaves, He replied : "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." As a sinner, every one of them was in slavery. A bond-servant, Jesus reminded them, was allowed in the master's house by sufferance only ; it was not his inherent right to remain there ; his owner could send him away at any time, and might even sell him to another ; but a son of the family had of his own right a place in his father's home. Now, if the Son of God made them free they would be free indeed. Though they were of Abrahamic

lineage in the flesh, they were no heirs of Abraham in spirit or works. Our Lord's mention of His Father as distinct from their father drew forth the angry reiteration, "Abraham is our father", to which Jesus replied: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father." In their blind anger they apparently construed this to imply that though they were children of Abraham's household some other man than Abraham was their actual progenitor, or that they were not of unmixed Israelitish blood. "We be not born of fornication" they cried, "we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."

They failed to understand because of their stubborn refusal to listen dispassionately. With forceful accusation Jesus told them whose children they actually were, as evinced by the hereditary traits manifest in their lives: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.^c And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." He challenged them to find sin in Him; and then asked why, if He spake the truth, they so persistently refused to believe Him. Answering His own question, He told them that they were not of God and therefore they understood not the words of God. The Master was unimpeachable; His terse, cogent assertions were unanswerable. In impotent rage the discomfited Jews resorted to invective and calumny. "Say we not well that

^c Compare P. of G. P., Moses 4:4; 5:24; B. of M., 2 Nephi 2:18; Doc. and Cov. 10:25; 93:25.

thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" they shrieked. They had before called Him a Galilean; that appellative was but mildly depreciatory, and moreover was a truthful designation according to their knowledge; but the epithet "Samaritan" was inspired by hate,^d and by its application they meant to disown Him as a Jew.

The charge that He was a demoniac was but a repetition of earlier slanders. "Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me." Reverting to the eternal riches offered by His gospel, the Master said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." This rendered them the more infuriate: "Now we know that thou hast a devil" they cried, and as evidence of what they professed to regard as His insanity, they cited the fact that great as were Abraham and the prophets they were dead, yet Jesus dared to say that all who kept His sayings should be exempt from death. Did He pretend to exalt Himself above Abraham and the prophets? "Whom makest thou thyself?" they demanded. The Lord's reply was a disclaimer of all self-aggrandizement; His honor was not of His own seeking, but was the gift of His Father, whom He knew; and were He to deny that He knew the Father He would be a liar like unto themselves. Touching the relationship between Himself and the great patriarch of their race, Jesus thus affirmed and emphasized His own supremacy: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Not only angered but puzzled, the Jews demanded further explanation. Construing the last declaration as applying to the mortal state only, they said: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."

This was an unequivocal and unambiguous declaration of our Lord's eternal Godship. By the awful title I AM He had

^d Pages 174, 183.

made Himself known to Moses and thereafter was so known in Israel.^e As already shown, it is the equivalent of "Yah-veh," or "Jahveh," now rendered "Jehovah," and signifies "The Self-existent One," "The Eternal," "The First and the Last."^f Jewish traditionalism forbade the utterance of the sacred Name; yet Jesus claimed it as His own. In an orgy of self-righteous indignation, the Jews seized upon the stones that lay in the unfinished courts, and would have crushed their Lord, but the hour of His death had not yet come, and unseen of them He passed through the crowd and departed from the temple.

His seniority to Abraham plainly referred to the status of each in the antemortal or preexistent state; Jesus was as literally the Firstborn in the spirit-world, as He was the Only Begotten in the flesh. Christ is as truly the Elder Brother of Abraham and Adam as of the last-born child of earth.^g

BODILY AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS—SIGHT GIVEN TO A MAN
ON THE SABBATH.^h

At Jerusalem Jesus mercifully gave sight to a man who had been blind from his birth.ⁱ The miracle is an instance of Sabbath-day healing, of more than ordinary interest because of its attendant incidents. It is recorded by John alone, and, as usual with that writer, his narrative is given with descriptive detail. Jesus and His disciples saw the sightless one upon the street. The poor man lived by begging. The disciples, eager to learn, asked: "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" The Lord's reply

^e Exo. 3:14; compare 6:3.

^f Compare Isa. 44:6; Rev. 1:4, 8; see also John 17:5, 24; Col. 1:17. Page 36 herein.

^g Page 13.

^h John 9.

ⁱ Whether this incident occurred in immediate sequence to the events last considered, or at a later time after the return of Jesus to Jerusalem following an unrecorded departure therefrom, is not stated in the scriptural record. The value of the lesson is not affected by its place in the catalog of our Lord's works.

was: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." The disciples' question implied their belief in a state of moral agency and choice antedating mortality; else, how could they have thought of the man having sinned so as to bring upon himself congenital blindness? We are expressly told that he was born blind. That he might have been a sufferer from the sins of his parents was conceivable.^j The disciples evidently had been taught the great truth of an antemortal existence. It is further to be seen that they looked upon bodily affliction as the result of personal sin. Their generalization was too broad; for, while as shown by instances heretofore cited,^k individual wickedness may and does bring physical ills in its train, man is liable to err in his judgment as to the ultimate cause of affliction. The Lord's reply was sufficing; the man's blindness would be turned to account in bringing about a manifestation of divine power. As Jesus explained respecting His own ministry, it was necessary that He do the Father's work in the season appointed, for His time was short. With impressive pertinency as relating to the state of the man who had been in darkness all his days, our Lord repeated the affirmation before made in the temple, "I am the light of the world."

The outward ministration to the blind man was different from the usual course followed by Jesus. "He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay"; and then directed him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash in its waters.^l The man went, washed, and came seeing. He was evidently a well-known character; many had seen him in his accustomed place begging alms, and the fact that he had been blind from birth was also of common knowledge. When, therefore, it

^j Exo. 20:5; 34:7; Lev. 26:39; Numb. 14:18; 1 Kings 21:29; compare Ezek. chap. 18.

^k Pages 192 and 208.

^l Note 3, end of chapter.

was noised about that he could see, there was much excitement and comment. Some doubted that the man they questioned was the once sightless beggar; but he assured them of his identity, and told how he had been made to see. They brought the man to the Pharisees, who questioned him rigorously; and, having heard his account of the miracle, tried to undermine his faith by telling him that Jesus who had healed him could not be a man of God since He had done the deed on the Sabbath. Some of those who heard demurred to the Pharisaic deduction, and asked: "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" The man was questioned as to his personal opinion of Jesus, and promptly answered: "He is a prophet." The man knew his Benefactor to be more than any ordinary being; as yet, however, he had no knowledge of Him as the Christ.

The inquisitorial Jews were afraid of the result of such a wondrous healing, in that the people would support Jesus whom the rulers were determined to destroy. They assumed it to be possible that the man had not been really blind; so they summoned his parents, who answered their interrogatories by affirming that he was their son, and they knew him to have been born blind; but as to how he had received sight, or through whose ministration, they refused to commit themselves, knowing the rulers had decreed that any one who confessed Jesus to be the Christ should be cast out from the community of the synagog, or, as we would say today, excommunicated from the Church. With pardonable astuteness the parents said of their son: "He is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself."

Compelled to acknowledge, to themselves at least, that the fact and the manner of the man's restoration to sight were supported by irrefutable evidence, the crafty Jews called the man again, and insinuatingly said unto him: "Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner." He replied fearlessly, and with such pertinent logic as to com-

pletely offset their skill as cross-examiners: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." He very properly declined to enter into a discussion with his learned questioners as to what constituted sin under their construction of the law; of what he was ignorant he declined to speak; but on one matter he was happily and gratefully certain, that whereas he had been blind, now he could see.

The Pharisaical inquisitors next tried to get the man to repeat his story of the means employed in the healing, probably with the subtle purpose of leading him into inconsistent or contradictory statements; but he replied with emphasis, and possibly with some show of impatience, "I have told you already, and ye did not hear:^m wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?" They retorted with anger, and reviled the man; the ironical insinuation that they perchance wished to become disciples of Jesus was an insult they would not brook. "Thou art his disciple," said they, "but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is." They were enraged that this unlettered mendicant should answer so boldly in their scholarly presence; but the man was more than a match for all of them. His rejoinder was maddening because it flouted their vaunted wisdom, and withal was unanswerable. "Why herein is a marvellous thing," said he, "that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing."

For such an affront from a layman there was no precedent in all the lore of rabbis or scribes. "Thou wast alto-

^m That is, "heed" or "believe".

gether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" was their denunciatory though weak and inadequate rejoinder. Unable to cope with the sometime sightless beggar in argument or demonstration, they could at least exercize their official authority, however unjustly, by excommunicating him; and this they promptly did. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? he answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

In commenting upon the matter Jesus was heard to say that one purpose of His coming into the world was "that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Some of the Pharisees caught the remark, and asked in pride: "Are we blind also?" The Lord's reply was a condemnation: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

SHEPHERD AND SHEEP-HERDER.ⁿ

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." With these words Jesus prefaced one of His most impressive discourses. The mention of shepherd and sheep must have brought to the minds of His hearers many of the oft-quoted passages from prophets and psalms.^o The figure is an effective one, and all the more so when we consider the circumstances under which it was used by the Master. Pastoral conditions prevailed in Palestine, and the dignity of the shepherd's voca-

ⁿ John 10:1-21.

^o Note the promise of a Shepherd to Israel, Isa. 40:11; 49:9, 10; Ezek. 34:23; 37:24; compare Jer. 3:15; 23:4; Heb. 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4; Rev. 7:17. Read studiously Psalm 23.

tion was very generally recognized. By specific prophecy a Shepherd had been promised to Israel. David, the king of whom all Israelites were proud, had been taken directly from the sheepfold, and had come with a shepherd's crook in his hand to the anointing that made him royal.

As the Teacher showed, a shepherd has free access to the sheep. When they are folded within the enclosure of safety, he enters at the gate; he neither climbs over nor creeps in.^p He, the owner of the sheep loves them; they know his voice and follow him as he leads from fold to pasture, for he goes before the flock; while the stranger, though he be the herder, they know not; he must needs drive, for he cannot lead. Continuing the allegory, which the recorder speaks of as a parable, Jesus designated Himself as the door to the sheepfold, and made plain that only through Him could the undershepherds rightly enter. True, there were some who sought by avoiding the portal and climbing over the fence to reach the folded flock; but these were robbers, trying to get at the sheep as prey; their selfish and malignant purpose was to kill and carry off.

Changing the figure, Christ proclaimed: "I am the good shepherd." He then further showed, and with eloquent exactness, the difference between a shepherd and a hireling herder. The one has personal interest in and love for his flock, and knows each sheep by name, the other knows them only as a flock, the value of which is gaged by number; to the hireling they are only as so many or so much. While the shepherd is ready to fight in defense of his own, and if necessary even imperil his life for his sheep, the hireling flees when the wolf approaches, leaving the way open for the ravening beast to scatter, rend, and kill.

Never has been written or spoken a stronger arraignment of false pastors, unauthorized teachers, self-seeking hirelings who teach for pelf and divine for dollars, deceivers

^p Note 7, end of chapter.

who pose as shepherds yet avoid the door and climb over "some other way," prophets in the devil's employ, who to achieve their master's purpose, hesitate not to robe themselves in the garments of assumed sanctity, and appear in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves.^q

With effective repetition Jesus continued: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." For this cause was Jesus the Father's Beloved Son—that He was ready to lay down His life for the sake of the sheep. That the sacrifice He was soon to render was in fact voluntary, and not a forfeiture under compulsion, is solemnly affirmed in the Savior's words: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." The certainty of His death and of His subsequent resurrection are here reiterated. A natural effect of His immortal origin, as the earth-born Son of an immortal Sire, was that He was immune to death except as He surrendered thereto. The life of Jesus the Christ could not be taken save as He willed and allowed. The power to lay down His life was inherent in Himself, as was the power to take up His slain body in an immortalized state.^r These teachings caused further division among the Jews. Some pretended to dispose of the matter by voicing anew the foolish assumption that Jesus was but an insane demoniac, and that therefore His words were not worthy of attention. Others with consistency said "These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" So it was that a few believed, many doubted though partly convinced, and some condemned.

^q Matt. 7:15; compare 24:4, 5, 11, 24; Mark 13:22; Rom. 16:17, 18; Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1; Acts 20:29.

^r Pages 22 and 81.

As part of this profound discourse, Jesus said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."^s The "other sheep" here referred to constituted the separated flock or remnant of the house of Joseph, who, six centuries prior to the birth of Christ, had been miraculously detached from the Jewish fold in Palestine, and had been taken beyond the great deep to the American continent. When to them the resurrected Christ appeared He thus spake: "And verily, I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said, other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."^t The Jews had vaguely understood Christ's reference to other sheep as meaning in some obscure way, the Gentile nations; and because of their unbelief and consequent inability to rightly comprehend, Jesus had withheld any plainer exposition of His meaning, for so, He informed the Nephites, had the Father directed. "This much did the Father command me," He explained, "that I should tell unto them, That other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." On the same occasion the Lord declared that there were yet other sheep, those of the Lost, or Ten, Tribes, to whom He was then about to go, and who would eventually be brought forth from their place of exile, and become part of the one blessed fold under the governance of the one supreme Shepherd and King."^u

NOTES TO CHAPTER 25.

1. **The Feast of Tabernacles.**—In the order of yearly occurrence this was the third of the great festivals, the observance of which was among the national characteristics of the people of

^s John 10:16; compare as to "one fold and one shepherd," Ezek. 37:22; Isa. 11:13; Jer. 3:18; 50:4. See "Articles of Faith," xviii,—"The Gathering of Israel."

^t B. of M., 3 Nephi 15:21; read verses 12-24; see chapter 39 herein.

^u 3 Nephi 16:1-5.

Israel; the others were the Passover, and the feast of Weeks or Pentecost; at each of the three all the males in Israel were required to appear before the Lord in formal celebration of the respective feast (Exo. 23:17). The feast of Tabernacles was also known as the "feast of ingathering" (Exo. 23:16); it was both a memorial and a current harvest celebration. In commemoration of their long journeying in the wilderness following their deliverance from Egypt, in the course of which journey they had to live in tents and improvised booths, the people of Israel were required to observe annually a festival lasting seven days, with an added day of holy convocation. During the week the people lived in booths, bowers, or tabernacles, made of the branches or "boughs of goodly trees" wattled with willows from the brook (Lev. 23:34-43; Numb. 29:12-38; Deut. 16:13-15; 31:10-13). The festival lasted from the 15th to the 22d of the month Tizri, the seventh in the Hebrew calendar, corresponding to parts of our September and October. It was made to follow soon after the annual Day of Atonement which was a time of penitence and affliction of the soul in sorrow for sin (Lev. 23:26-32). The altar sacrifices at the feast of Tabernacles exceeded those prescribed for other festivals, and comprised a daily offering of two rams, fourteen lambs, and a kid as a sin offering, and in addition a varying number of young bullocks, thirteen of which were sacrificed on the first day, twelve on the second, eleven on the third, and so on to the seventh day, on which seven were offered, making in all seventy bullocks (Numb. 29:12-38). Rabbinism invested this number, seventy, and the graded diminution in the number of altar victims, with much symbolical significance not set forth in the law.

At the time of Christ, tradition had greatly embellished many of the prescribed observances. Thus the "boughs of goodly trees," more literally rendered "fruit" (Lev. 23:40), had come to be understood as the citron fruit; and this every orthodox Jew carried in one hand while, in the other he bore a leafy branch or a bunch of twigs, known as the "lulab," when he repaired to the temple for the morning sacrifice, and in the joyous processions of the day. The ceremonial carrying of water from the spring of Siloam to the altar of sacrifice was a prominent feature of the service. This water was mingled with wine at the altar and the mixture was poured upon the sacrificial offering. Many authorities hold that the bringing of water from the pool was omitted on the last or great day of the feast, and it is inferred that Jesus had in mind the circumstance of the omission when He cried: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." At night, during the progress of the feast, great lamps were kept burning in the temple courts, and this incident Christ may have used as an objective illustration in his proclamation: "I am the light of the world."

For fuller account see any reliable and comprehensive Bible Dictionary, and Josephus Ant. viii, 4:1; xv, 3:3, etc. The following is an excerpt from Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, vol. ii, p. 158-160: "When the Temple-procession had

reached the Pool of Siloam, the priest filled his golden pitcher from its waters. Then they went back to the Temple, so timing it that they should arrive just as they were laying the pieces of the sacrifice on the great altar of burnt-offering, towards the close of the ordinary morning-sacrifice service. A threefold blast of the priests' trumpets welcomed the arrival of the priest as he entered through the Water Gate, which obtained its name from this ceremony, and passed straight into the Court of the Priests.

Immediately after the 'pouring of the water,' the great 'Hallel,' consisting of Psalms 113 to 118 inclusive, was chanted antiphonally, or rather, with responses, to the accompaniment of the flute. In further symbolism of this Feast, as pointing to the ingathering of the heathen nations, the public services closed with a procession round the altar by the priests. But on 'the last, the Great Day of the Feast,' this procession of priests made the circuit of the altar, not only once, but seven times, as if they were again compassing, but now with prayer, the Gentile Jericho which barred their possession of the promised land."

2. The Test of our Lord's Doctrine.—Any man may know for himself whether the doctrine of Christ is of God or not by simply doing the will of the Father (John 7:17). Surely it is a more convincing course than that of relying upon another's word. The writer was once approached by an incredulous student in college, who stated that he could not accept as true the published results of a certain chemical analysis, since the specified amounts of some of the ingredients were so infinitesimally small that he could not believe it possible to determine such minute quantities. The student was but a beginner in chemistry; and with his little knowledge he had undertaken to judge as to the possibilities of the science. He was told to do the things his instructor prescribed, and he should some day know for himself whether the results were true or false. In the senior year of his course, he received for laboratory analysis a portion of the very substance whose composition he had once questioned. With the skill attained by faithful devotion he successfully completed the analysis, and reported results similar to those, which in his inexperience he had thought impossible to obtain. He was manly enough to acknowledge as unfounded his earlier skepticism and rejoiced in the fact that he had been able to demonstrate the truth for himself.

3. The Pool of Siloam.—"The names 'Shiloah' ('Shelah,' Neh. 3:15, 'Siloah' in authorized version) and 'Siloam' are the exact equivalent in Hebrew and Greek, respectively, of 'Silwan' in the modern Arabic name ('Ain Silwan') of the pool at the mouth of El-Wad. All the ancient references agree with this identification (compare Neh. 3:15; Josephus, Wars of the Jews, v, 4:1, 2; 6:1; 9:4; 12:2; ii, 16:2; vi, 7:2; 8:5). In spite of its modern designation as an 'ain' (spring), Siloam is not a spring, but is fed by a tunnel cut through the rock from the Gihon, or Virgin's Fountain."—L. B. Paton, in article "Jerusalem," *Stand. Bible Dictionary*.

4. Whence was the Messiah to Come?—Many stifled their inward promptings to a belief in Jesus as the Messiah, by the objection that all prophecies relating to His coming pointed to Bethlehem as His birthplace, and Jesus was of Galilee. Others rejected Him because they had been taught that no man was to know whence the Messiah came and they all knew Jesus came from Galilee. The seeming inconsistency is thus explained: The city of David, or Bethlehem in Judea, was beyond question the fore-appointed place of the Messiah's birth; but the rabbis had erroneously taught that soon after birth the Christ Child would be caught away, and after a time would appear as a Man, and that no one would know whence or how He had returned. Geikie (ii, p. 274), citing Lightfoot in part, thus states the popular criticism: “‘Do not the rabbis tell us’ said some, ‘that the Messiah will be born at Bethlehem, but that He will be snatched away by spirits and tempests soon after His birth, and that when He returns the second time no one will know from whence He has come?’ But we know this man comes from Nazareth.”

5. The Record Relating to the Woman Taken in Adultery.

—Some modern critics claim that the verses John 7:53 and 8:1-11 inclusive are out of place as they appear in the authorized or King James version of the Bible, on the grounds that the incident therein recorded does not appear in certain of the ancient manuscript copies of John's Gospel, and that the style of the narrative is distinctive. In some manuscripts it appears at the end of the book. Other manuscripts contain the account as it appears in the English Bible. Canon Farrar pertinently asks (p. 404, note), why, if the incident is out of place or not of John's authorship, so many important manuscripts give place to it as we have it?

6. The Treasury, and Court of the Women.—“Part of the space within the inner courts was open to Israelites of both sexes, and was known distinctively as the Court of the Women. This was a colonnaded enclosure, and constituted the place of general assembly in the prescribed course of public worship. Chambers used for ceremonial purposes occupied the four corners of this court; and between these and the houses at the gates, were other buildings, of which one series constituted the Treasury wherein were set trumpet-shaped receptacles for gifts.” (See Mark 12: 41-44.)—*The House of the Lord*, pp. 57-58.

7. The Sheepfold.—Dummelow's *Commentary* says, on John 10:2: “To understand the imagery, it must be remembered that Eastern folds are large open enclosures, into which several flocks are driven at the approach of night. There is only one door, which a single shepherd guards, while the others go home to rest. In the morning the shepherds return, are recognized by the doorkeeper, call their flocks round them, and lead them forth to pasture.”

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